LUTHERAN EDUCATION

IN THIS ISSUE

Making Christians

Law, Gospel, and Identity

Drama in Chapel Services

Developing Christ-Esteem

Children in Worship

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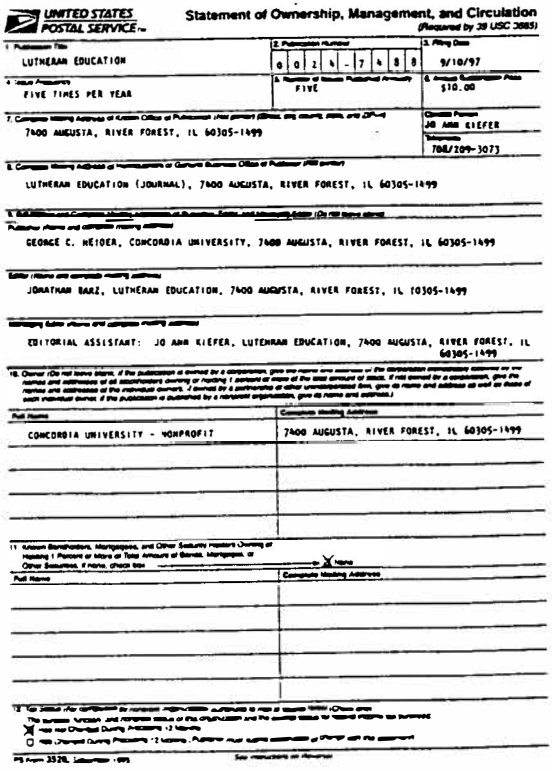
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A Note from the Publisher

With this issue we welcome a new editor to the helm: Jonathan Barz, Assistant Professor of English at Concordia University. Like his predecessors Merle Radke and Wayne Lucht, Prof. Barz's scholarly expertise lies in one of the liberal arts "disciplines," yet is combined with preparation and experience as a teacher, as well as a profound love for the classroom. Prof. Barz has been appointed as "acting editor" for 1997-98, while the University reviews the purpose and nature of the publication, particularly in the light of the changing needs of the members of the Lutheran Education Association and, more generally, of Lutheran Christian educators. As president of Concordia University, I am keenly aware of the heritage and treasure which is represented by *Lutheran Education* as the oldest continuously published education journal in the United States. I am determined that, as we enter a new millennium of the years of our Lord, we ensure that it speaks as powerfully and usefully to future educators as it has done since 1865. To this end, readers' comments are welcome; please contact Prof. Barz at the University.

George C. Heider



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Upholding or Holding Up?

Matters of Opinion

By Jonathan M. Barz, Editor

On a wall in my office hangs a framed note which I uncovered recently while sorting through a file cabinet I inherited with the editorship of *Lutheran Education*. It's dated August 31, 1964, and it reads, "I am pleased to send greetings to Concordia Teachers College of River Forest as you embark upon this centennial year of the publication of *Lutheran Education*. As our Nation's oldest educational journal in continuous circulation, *Lutheran Education* has upheld the highest traditions of fine teaching so necessary to the progress and continued well-being of our beloved land." This congratulatory message is typed on White House stationery and bears the signature of Lyndon Johnson.

Each day as I look up from my computer, President Johnson's note mutely reminds me of the tremendous richness and depth of both *Lutheran Education* and Lutheran education. Lutheran schools — and this journal which attempts to speak for and to Lutheran educators of all kinds and at all levels — have indeed "upheld the highest traditions of fine teaching so necessary to the progress and continued well-being of our beloved land." What is more important, both have continually sought to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and build the kingdom of Heaven through nurture of those within the Church and outreach to those beyond its walls.

But there's something about President Johnson's use of the word "upheld" which makes me vaguely uneasy. A joke I heard many years ago defined a "pillar of the church" as someone who "holds up" the church. To "hold up" can mean to raise high or support a vital task or cause, but my *Webster's* also defines it as "to stop; delay; impede." Sometimes pillars of the church simply make sure that nothing ever moves forward. And I ask myself, which definition describes what *Lutheran Education* — or Lutheran education — actually does?

With these definitions in mind, I've turned to some other thought-provoking reading material recently. As many of you know, a survey was sent this spring to those who receive this journal as part of their Lutheran Education Association membership. The goal was to hear from readers in order to re-evaluate the form and substance of the journal, to look at what its mission is and what it should be, whom it is serving and how it can serve them most faithfully. The responses from almost 500 LEA members suggest a few answers to these questions and raise a few more.

Not surprisingly, no unanimous responses emerged (except

perhaps for the fact that none of the respondents have enough time for reading publications like *Lutheran Education).* Would anyone expect 500 Lutheran teachers to agree on anything? But a few strong voices of consensus — and some vocal dissent — did emerge. My initial reading of the survey results is that they affirm the importance of the journal for many Lutheran educators and much of what it has been and done for the past century and a third. But there are some tensions evident as well.

It is tremendously difficult for a single journal to speak to the diverse interests, issues and concerns of an audience as broad as the readership of *Lutheran Education.* Professionals consumed with the myriad details of daily life in the parish or classroom often thirst for the "practical," ideas which will make tomorrow easier, rather than for more theoretical discussions which may take considerable further thought to put into practice — and which may, in the end, only lead to further questions. And there is a natural tendency for busy individuals to want most what is most immediately applicable to their own specific area of ministry, at their grade level or in their type of congregational setting.

Can *Lutheran Education* as a journal resolve or surmount these tensions in order to continue to be a valuable resource for Lutheran teachers of all kinds? Can the journal be a forum for the kind of theoretical or philosophical inquiry into the work of Christian education which will help those in the trenches to work toward answers applicable to their day-to-day concerns? Should the journal take on a different form to speak more effectively to its broad readership? Or does it need to refocus to address a narrower audience? Questions such as these are at the heart of current discussions at the University about the future of the journal. I'm not sure yet what all the answers to these questions are, but I'm glad that they are being asked.

At its best, for over a century, this journal has offered Lutheran educators of various stripes an opportunity to address each other: to encourage, inspire, provoke thought, offer counsel — and perhaps even irritate from time to time. As the journal has striven to address all of us involved in Lutheran education, recognizing our diversity and our particularity, it has also attempted to speak for and to all that joins us in the common mission of providing education — in the early childhood center or on the college campus, in the classroom or in the parish — which proclaims Christ crucified.

The 133-year heritage of this journal creates considerable inertia, making change of any kind difficult. And that's not all bad; the heritage of Lutheran education can be one of our great strengths. Paradoxically, sometimes it is helpful to look backwards in order to march forward. But we all need to be mindful about that tricky distinction between "upholding" and "holding up."

As we continue to discuss how *Lutheran Education* can best contribute to the ministry of Lutheran Christian education in the future, I'd like to invite your prayer and counsel. Please write to me here at Concordia or e-mail me at crfbarzjm@crf.cuis.edu with any comments or suggestions you may have.

John H. Westerhoff

Lutheran Schools and the Making of Christians

The Rev. Dr. John Westerhoff is an Episcopal priest and author, onetime Professor of Theology and Christian Nurture at the Duke University Divinity School and presently Director of the Institute for Pastoral Studies at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

A Lutheran school is called to provide much more than a good education and biblical studies in an atmosphere of piety. A Lutheran school is called to a have a unifying Christian world view that it brings to bear on all its academic studies as well as every other aspect of its life. A Lutheran school is called to share in the mission and ministry of the Lutheran Church. A Lutheran school is called to integrate faith and learning, piety and scholarship, culture and faith, reason and revelation. A Lutheran school is called to have as its purpose the making of Christians. The question is, how faithful is your school to this calling and how well does your school realize this potential?

Facing Our Current Situation Honestly

In the third century, Tertullian, an African theologian, wrote, "Christians are made, not born." A child does not become a Christian simply because his or her parents are Christians. Each person needs to be fashioned into being Christian

within the church. The question, therefore, was and is still, how? The answer in those days, in Greek, was *catechesis*. *Catechesis* literally means to echo and in this case, to echo the Word, Jesus Christ. In English *catechesis* became "Christening". Now beginning in the sixteenth century, echoing the Word turned into echoing the *words of* a catechism. And baptism began to be referred to as Christening or the making of a Christian.

It is true, of course, that through baptism a person is made a Christian, but there is a significant difference between nouns and adjectives, between being a Christian and being Christian. Christianity is a way of life which issues forth from a particular perception of life or faith. Being Christian, therefore, is manifesting the Christian life of faith. The making of Christ-like people and communities is a life long process of living into our baptism within a community of faith, that is of becoming who our baptism tells us we really are. Memorizing a catechism may serve a theological purpose in this becoming Christ-like, but it will never be sufficient in the making of Christians.

Modernity, the historical, social, cultural context in which we have lived, has greatly influenced our understandings and practices of catechesis. And in our day many, including myself, believe that modernity is drawing to a close, making our century one of the transforming centuries like unto the first, fourth, tenth/eleventh, and sixteenth.

The historical context in which we live began in the sixteenth century. It has to the exclusion of other truths so emphasized reason — the intellectual way of thinking and knowing, science and technology, the autonomous, objective, independent individual and the material world, the belief that doing precedes being, and the conviction that we humans can and must manage nature, history, society, and ourselves — that it has reached its moral limits and is in need of radical transformation.

> A Lutheran school is called to have as its purpose the making of Christians. The question is, how faithful is your school to this calling and how well does your school realize this potential?

Our social context, which began in the fourth century, resulted in Christendom, a society in which Christianity was dominant and merged with the social order. In such a social context there was little difference between being a good Christian and a good citizen. While in the United States there was an established separation of church and state, the church had significant influence and the state supported the church' s values and concerns. We lived in a Christian country and the mission field was among pagans elsewhere. But this synthesis is breaking apart. Society is now indifferent to

Christianity, though it still gives it lip service. The church increasingly loses status and influence. People believe and pray and go to church, but such religious practices have little effect on their personal or social lives. In this context the church's missionary calling has moved home.

Our cultural context, which began with the birth of our nation, has become increasingly pluralistic. In response we have moved from a conscious, intentional attempt to produce a "melting pot" society to the affirmation of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Maintaining a sense of unity while affirming and maintaining this diversity is extremely complex and difficult. More serious, increasingly there has been an affirmation of religious pluralism, not just as a fact to be addressed in peaceful ways, but in principle. The result has been to relativize and privatize all religion and thereby to keep religious convictions and discourse out of decision making.

During this historical, social, cultural era, the school and our understanding of education, both religious and secular or public, have emerged. During modernity, therefore, we have been more concerned about teaching doctrine or rational conclusions about propositional truth than we have been with faith understood as a community's perception of life and their lives to which loyalty, trust, and devotion are to be given. Further, our primary concern has been value clarification and the teaching of moral decision making through problem solving, which has led to a neglect of the persons who make decisions and their character, that is, their identity as baptized Christians and their resultant disposition to behave in Christ-like ways. And finally we have tended to focus on individual experience and to neglect consciousness, that subjective, interior awareness that makes particular experiences, such as the presence and action of God in human life and history, possible. Combine these tendencies with an irrational fear of indoctrination and it is easy to understand why we focused our attention on instruction in a schooling context and ignored other ways of knowing, thinking, and learning. The church bought into this mind set, and by doing so worked against its commitment to nurture Christians.

Under these circumstances, while every church school had an aim or mission statement that was consistent with the gospel, it also had a primary task or what it was really about which typically conflicted with its aim. Another way to put it is to say that every school has both a stated curriculum expressing what it intends to be learned, and a hidden curriculum which influences what students really learn.

Our instructional programs may be exemplary and by society's standards excellent, but because, for example, we are uncritical of our school and how we teach we may be unintentionally engaged in the malformation of Christians. By the time children are twelve years old they have spent more hours in school than they have spent with their families and church combined. It is has been calculated that more than ninety percent of the time a

child spends in school is spent on enculturation; only ten percent is spent in formal instruction. The hidden curriculum of the school it appears is more influential than the stated curriculum.

How Do We Make Christians?

Catechesis (Christening) as I understand it is comprised of three intentional, related, lifelong processes: formation, education, and instruction/training. Formation both conforms (nurtures) and transforms (converts) persons to live in faithful Christ-like ways.

Instruction/training informs persons in terms of knowledge and abilities believed to be important for understanding the Christian life of faith. And education reforms persons by helping them to discover the dissonance between how they are living and how they are called by Christ to live thereby making their efforts at formation more faithful.

As such, processes of instruction aid persons in acquiring the knowledge and training, the skills or abilities that are part of the Christian life of faith. For example, through instructional processes persons acquire a knowledge and comprehension of the content of Scripture. Through the processes of training they acquire the ability to interpret its meaning and implications for daily life and work. Instruction alone, however, can produce persons who know all about Christianity but who do not intend to be Christian. Nevertheless, without the benefit of instruction, persons may not know what is the Christian faith or faithfulness. I would suggest that within our schooling/instructional paradigm we have over-emphasized instruction and training, though even training has not be taken as seriously as instruction.

The processes of education help persons to reflect critically on their thoughts, experiences, and behavior in the light of the gospel so that they might discern if they are living the Christian life of faith faithfully and, if not, how they might change their lives. For example, through critical reflection on the ways we live together as families, congregations, and schools, we are enabled to reform them. Christians, therefore, need to make education, as I am defining it, a natural part of their lives and not solely a program. A school is to *be* an educational ministry not *have* one. It has been a neglect of this understanding and practice of education that has prevented us from becoming more faithful, and its practice will be essential if we are to reach our potential as Lutheran schools.

Nevertheless, it is the processes of formation that need to be considered most if our potential to fashion Christ-like persons is to be realized.

Formation is related to a natural process called enculturation, the intentional process by which persons acquire their understandings and ways of life within a culture. Education is necessary for faithful formation, and instruction/training is necessary for faithful education, but formation is

foundational because it is the primary means by which Christians are made. Indeed, it is because we have typically ignored formation that few of our schools have reached their potential to fashion Christ-like persons.

Formation is the participation in and practice of the Christian life of faith. It is not determinative. That is, we need to acknowledge that in one sense we cannot make Christians, determine that persons will become Christ-like. Each person has a soul (a unified body, mind, spirit) that freely interacts with both the influences of heredity and environment and then accepts, rejects, or adapts to those influences. For this reason God will never judge us on how our students turn out, but only on how we who are teachers and administrators turn out, which is enough to lose sleep over. All we can do is to create, with God's help, the most faithful school we know how. That, of course, is itself the tremendous task to which we now turn.

Formation involves eight aspects of communal life, in this case aspects of life in a school, each of which contributes to and influences the practices and experiences that are foundational and necessary for the making of Christians. We will examine each in turn.

Communal Rituals

Rituals are repetitive, symbolic acts that express and manifest the Church's sacred narrative. Repetitive, in that they occur over and over in the same way, daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly. Symbolic in that they point beyond themselves and participate in that to which they point, thereby having the power to affect our lives deeply. In a school this would include worship services, assemblies, graduation ceremonies, public spectator sporting events, and the giving of grades and awards.

Environment

Our school environment includes architectural space and artifacts, along with sights, sounds, smells and tastes. This environment encourages or discourages, facilitates or hinders, possibilities for particular participations and practices. In a school the environment includes what we wear, what we eat, what we hear over the P.A. system, and so forth.

Ordering of Time

This includes our orientation toward past, present and future, the structure of time in terms of particular activities participated in, such as how much time is spent on music and where in the school day it occurs, and the ordering of time in terms of the calendar. It also includes what days and seasons the school celebrates and how it celebrates them.

Organizing Life

Life in a school includes governance and budgets, programs and events, courses and extracurricular activities. It is concerned with both what is taught and what is not taught, when, and how frequently. This includes how the school expects and encourages students to spend

their time, talents, and resources both in school and outside.

Discipline

Discipline refers to behaviors that are taught, encouraged, practiced, and celebrated within the school. This includes Christian virtues, but especially important is the practice of critical reflection on every aspect of life and our lives in the light of the gospel and resistance to non-Christian influences.

Social Interaction

Social interaction refers to who does what with whom and for what purposes, the natural normal unconscious ways in which people relate to and treat each other, especially those interactions that are encouraged or discouraged. It also includes who attends the school and the kind of persons with whom students interact.

Role Models

Role models are persons past and present who are acknowledged and remembered as exemplars of the Christian life of faith. They are the "masters" to whom students are apprenticed — teachers and administrators being the most important examples.

Language

Language refers to the naming of reality and the descriptions of behaviors. For example, we perform actions through our words: we promise, pledge, apologize, forgive, judge, rebuke and thereby affect relationships. Language includes both verbal and nonverbal communications, our vocabulary and our grammar. It also includes issues such as inclusive language. Further it involves how teachers and administrators speak and how they encourage students to speak.

A Personal Image of a Lutheran School

What follows is intended to initiate conversation rather than debate. It represents a few of my first thoughts on what a school that is committed to the making of Christians might look like. My fear is that it is so counter-cultural it will be too quickly rejected. And, of course, we need to remember that unless what a school looks like is consistent with what is going on in the churches that support the school and the homes of the children who attend, it will have little relevance in our attempt to produce Christ-like people.

In my school, worship will be at the heart of its life, with each day set in the context of communal and personal prayer. In the place of singing the national anthem and saluting the flag, the community will pray for the nation and its leaders. While strongly supporting athletics, especially lifelong sports such as jogging and golf, there will be no spectator sports. Also, non-competitive, non-aggressive games will be encouraged. External awards will be discouraged and internal awards encouraged. Communal projects and grades which take into account cooperation with others and helping

others to learn will be common throughout the school.

There will be a chapel where students and faculty can come during the day to meditate and pray. Quality Christian art and artifacts which communicate the Christian story will be all about. Church music such as Bach anthems will fill the air. Stewardship of the buildings and the environment will be encouraged. Uniforms will be worn to support equality and community consciousness. Architectural space will unite the sacred and the secular, the immanent and the transcendent nature of God.

The school will order its life and its activities according to the church year, and secular holidays will not be celebrated. Advent will result in a contemplative attitude at the school, Epiphany witness, Lent self examination; and so forth. All this will influence both the curriculum and school life so that the church's holidays will shape the school calendar including all extracurricular activities.

The school will develop its curriculum around work, service, study, prayer and play. Participation in the arts will play a major role in the life of the school, thereby enhancing the intuitive way of thinking and knowing. Religion will not be a separate subject, but will be integrated into others courses throughout the curriculum.

The school will be composed of students representing different, races, ethnic groups, cultures, genders, and socioeconomic classes. In this environment of diversity, major efforts will be made concerning how everyone is treated in terms of equity and will encourage healthy caring reconciling relationships.

The school will provide, through its faculty and administration, role models for Christian life of faith. Faculty, therefore, will be hired for their Christian character as much as their knowledge of a discipline and ability to teach.

> A school is to *be* an educational ministry not *have* one. It has been a neglect of this understanding and practice of education that has prevented us from becoming more faithful, and its practice will be essential if we are to reach our potential as Lutheran schools.

Resistance and critical reflection will be practiced as well as meditation, the reading of Scripture and other spiritual disciplines. The practice of compassion and service, simplicity of life and stewardship will be emphasized as well as active listening and prejudice reduction.

And finally all verbal and nonverbal communication will be taken seriously and students will be taught to talk in healthy, faithful ways.

Now having painted this picture of a Lutheran school whose mission is identical to the church's, namely to make

Christians, a Lutheran school will have to live with some paradoxes if the Christians we form are to be in but not of the world. For example, while it must aid students to acquire a positive self-identity as believers in Jesus Christ and members of his church, it also needs to help them to be open to the world and persons of other faith traditions. While it must prepare students to abide in God's reign, it must also need to prepare them for life in a secular society. And while it must model its life after a community of faith, it will also need to model itself after other schools which are committed to teaching math, science, history, English and so forth.

I acknowledge that my challenge to create faithful Lutheran schools that strive to reach their potential for influencing students to live into their baptism and become Christ-like persons will be a controversial challenge and an extremely difficult task, but I remain convinced that this is your vocation, and I remind you that with God's help all things are possible.

Title I Safeguards

A new Department of Education document offers schools guidance in light of the U. S. Supreme Court's June 23 ruling in *Agostini* v. *Felton*, which allows public school teachers to provide Title I instruction inside religious schools. The department cited the following safeguards — in place in the early 1980s — in the New York City program that the high court upheld:

- Only public employees could serve as Title I instructors and counselors;
- Assignment of public school personnel to private schools was made without regard to the religious affiliation of the employee;
- All religious symbols were removed from classrooms for Title I services;
- Personnel were instructed to limit their consultations with the regular classroom teacher to discussions concerning mutual concerns about the students' education; and
- A publicly employed field supervisor made one unannounced visit to each teacher's classroom each month.

Education Week, August 6, 1997

Jane Wilke

Building 'Christ-Esteem' in Children

Jane Wilke teaches preschool and serves as Early Childhood Coordinator at Christ Community Lutheran School in Kirkwood, MO. She also serves as extended staff for the Department of Child Ministry of the LC-MS and as a consultant on early childhood curriculum materials for Concordia Publishing House.

Watching the construction of a building is a fascinating experience. The foundation is laid, the frame constructed, and the finishing touches added. Building requires time, planning, patience, tenacity, labor, and cooperation. At times it even requires changing and adapting the master plan.

The process of building can be described as "a work in progress." With this phrase, the faces of children, also "works in progress," come to mind. Much has been written and said about building the "whole child" spiritually, physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally. This enterprise, like construction work, requires time, planning, patience, tenacity, labor, and cooperation. At times it, too, requires taking stock of the building process and altering the plans of construction where necessary.

The emotional development of children is often set aside as we strive to cultivate their spiritual, social, physical, and cognitive domains. Yet the emotions of children are inseparable from who they are in each area of development. When we give attention to linking the spiritual and

emotional development of children, their social, physical, and cognitive development will be affected as well.

Considering that we are in the business of assisting the "Master Builder," it is necessary to evaluate the impact our work has upon the spiritual and emotional development of young people and to make the necessary adjustments so that God's "work in progress" can flourish.

Christ-esteem frames a new structure and process for determining genuine self-worth which comes from acknowledging our need to turn from ourselves to Jesus.

Building a Definition for "Christ-Esteem"

We have all been bombarded with vernacular that brings self-esteem to the core of emotional development. Such terms include self-image, self-concept, and self-worth. Into this mix we add a new term, Christ-Esteem.

Self-esteem — one's overall judgement of personal worth — is a key element that affects attitudes, motivation, and behavior. In the purest sense of the word, self-esteem looks inward. It is a powerful tool in the process of building, for it can demolish as easily as it can serve to build.

Children with low self-esteem may not like themselves and may feel a lack of worth. On the other hand, children with high self-esteem may see themselves as having great worth but experience feelings of over-importance. Neither extreme is part of God's plan for his children. He created us in his image (Genesis 1:27), sent Jesus as our Savior (John 3:16), and urges us to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31).

Christ-esteem frames a new structure and process for determining genuine self-worth which comes from acknowledging our need to turn from ourselves to Jesus. It invites a new understanding that individual worth does not need to be earned or proven but comes as a gift of God through Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:17 states, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come."

Children with Christ-esteem celebrate their uniqueness as they realize that each has been gifted by God in unique ways. Children with Christ-esteem see these gifts as strengths, use their talents to God's glory, and uplift the gifts of others. In an equally important manner they accept their limitations, cope with their mistakes, and find peace in the assurance of forgiveness. Children with Christ-esteem begin to understand that their worth is not determined by what someone else thinks of them, but rather by what Christ has done for them. Christ loved them so much that He died and rose for them. Instead of an inward focus, Christ-esteem draws children outward as they grow in responsibility — their ability to respond to others through Christ's love.

Building a Plan

At the foundation of Christ-esteem is the unconditional love demonstrated in Christ's death and resurrection and the forgiveness that is ours each day. This, however, is a very abstract concept and children are concrete learners. Therefore, it is essential that unconditional love be modeled each day for them as we provide for a balance between law and Gospel in working with children. As instruments of the Holy Spirit we must teach them about forgiveness and equip them with strategies for coping as they experience the sin, frailties, mistakes, and disappointments that will be real in their lives.

Just as the builder alters the plan, we must make adjustments as well. We are significant adults in the lives of young people. We *speak* Christ to them. We must also *live* Christ to children in order for them to seek Christ as the core of their self-esteem. Do we treat and accept them as Christ would?

Children's lives are under construction one block at a time and our window of opportunity for influence may be momentary; however, in a world where self-esteem has become soundly humanistic it is essential for us to work in partnership with one another to harness God's power and give each building block a link to the sure foundation. Take an honest look at your interactions with children. Are they working to edify or sabotage the foundation?

Building Specific Strategies

Our children are being raised in a world where the picture they have of themselves is strongly influenced by media and the often inappropriate expectations of others. If we stand back and do nothing, it is likely that the evaluation children place on themselves, according to these images, will lead them to seeking importance through their own efforts rather than seeing their value as a new creation in Christ.

Building Christ-esteem, then, becomes the hidden curriculum for us in every interaction with young people, whether we are teaching in a classroom, coaching, leading a youth Bible study, or taking the children on a canoe trip. Many of the same strategies that have been taught for building self-esteem can be employed here as well. When we strive to build Christ-esteem, however, the old strategies take on a new twist. The following ten-step plan serves as a guideline for building Christ-esteem, or Christ-centered self-esteem:

1. Focus on each child's uniqueness. It may be easiest to work with a group of "cookie-cutter" children where every child is expected to achieve in exactly the same manner; however, that is not how God created them. They need us to help them celebrate their unique qualities.

Without ignoring their limitations, search out their gifts and provide outlets for their talents to evolve. Help them develop the creativity that comes from within. Throw out the patterns and the adult models for children to follow, and plan open-ended activities that allow each child to add his or her own stamp of uniqueness.

2. Create an atmosphere of value,

trust, and security. We create the climate of the environment in which our young people function. Many years ago author and teacher Hiam Ginott wrote, "Concerning a teacher's influence: I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration, I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized."

As Christ's representatives it is vital that we are available, affirming, and accepting so that the children might know that they can come to us with their problems and questions as well as reports of their achievements. In turn, they can better understand how they can approach Christ in the same manner.

3. Generate a sense of belonging. We all belong to the body of Christ, yet we are all looking for a place in which we can feel loved, accepted, and valued for who we are. Children are no different. Take time to listen to the children entrusted to you. Give them time to share what is important in their lives. Listen with your eyes as well as your ears.

Endeavor to give attention to each individual child. Help the young people in your group to feel connected with one another, encouraging them to share their triumphs and their fears, their thoughts and their feelings. Give them opportunities to care for one another and lift each other up in prayer.

4. Match expectations to development and provide opportunities for success. Become an expert in the developmental characteristics of the age group with whom you work and match your expectations accordingly. Set the bar high enough to create a challenge yet within range of achievement. Provide activities that will meet a variety of skill levels so that each child can experience success.

Help children to understand that winning and being first does not equal success. Rather, assist them in learning how to set individual goals and strive to reach those goals. Whatever the goal — to score one more basket than last time, to be prompt with assignments, or to listen without talking — it is valid and worth pursuing. The same is true for the goals we set in our Christian walk as we strive to live according to God's will.

5. Encourage problem-solving and coping. Mistakes, disappointments, and failures are part of our sinful world, yet God will not forsake us. As adults we move into the mode of protection and try to solve the problems of children for them. At times this may be appropriate; however, if we do not provide strategies for coping with difficulty how will they function when they face disappointment later in life? As these young people experience defeat, encourage them to express their feelings and help them to glean new insights from the experience.

Plan open-ended activities that provide for a variety of possible

solutions so they can practice problem-solving skills. Children who only experience activities with one possible answer will stop looking for solutions.

6. Replace words of praise with the language of encouragement. Words of praise prove to be a strong motivator for children. It is likely that they will want to repeat the behavior that brought the praise. At first glance this seems wonderful, yet consider the difference between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Children motivated extrinsically learn to depend on external sources such as good grades, first place trophies, and peer acceptance for their affirmation. Children motivated intrinsically are motivated from within. They are motivated from a desire to do the most with the gifts God has granted to them. Intrinsic motivation is at the center of a servant heart.

Words of praise — phrases like "Good job!" or "What a beautiful picture!" — are often general and evaluate the product. The language of encouragement is very specific and encourages the process. Examples of this are, "You took your time and finished the whole project!" or "Holding the door open for others is a polite and friendly thing to do!" Words of praise often suggest a reward for the effort, while the language of encouragement, based on assets and talents, helps children to accept themselves for who God made them to be, strengths and limitations and all.

7. Clearly define limits and enforce them with consistency. Children today are looking for places of safety. They need the adults in their lives to care about them enough to set age-appropriate standards and rules and to enforce them with reasonable consequences. Talk with the children about the standards that are acceptable and why they are important. Help them to understand that they are responsible for the choices that they make and the resulting behavior.

Share your standards with the parents and invite them to work in partnership with you. Educate parents regarding the difference between setting limits and allowing for age-appropriate choices. Children will come to a greater understanding of sin and forgiveness when they have clearly defined limits in their lives.

Author and teacher Hiam Ginott wrote, "Concerning a teacher's influence: I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. . . . As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous.

8. Help children develop skills of peaceful conflict resolution. Conflict between children is inevitable. Feelings of anger, disappointment, jealousy, and hurt will surface numerous times throughout a day. What we teach children to do with the conflict and their

feelings is a key element for building Christ-esteem.

This goal cannot be accomplished by merely telling young people to "work it out." It requires time and intentional strategies which will help children learn how to articulate their feelings and broaden their own perspective as they listen to each other's needs. Guide them as they come up with solutions to the problem and encourage them to share the gift of forgiveness with each other. Help them to see how their choices and their behavior affect others.

9. Share forgiveness and allow each child to start the day with a fresh, clean slate. The most effective way for children to comprehend the meaning of forgiveness is for it to take on meaning in their frame of reference. Accepting forgiveness and sharing it with others will help children understand that the forgiveness Christ showers upon us is real. It encourages a sense of community as we realize how Christ works through each of us.

In addition to helping children understand the need to ask for and accept forgiveness, it is essential that we do the same. A powerful lesson in confession and absolution is learned when children see adults ask for forgiveness. A powerful lesson in unconditional love is modeled when adults grant forgiveness and give children a fresh, clean slate each day. After all, is that not what Christ has done for us?

10. Nurture your own Christ-esteem. In Matthew 19:19 we read, "love your neighbor as yourself." In John 13:34 we read, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." As we love, honor, and esteem Christ in our own lives we will be better equipped to build Christ-esteem as we help children celebrate their sense of worth as God's children, one block at a time.

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Peter M. Becker, Shirley K. Morgenthaler, and Gary L. Bertels

Children in Worship An Overview of the Project

Dr. Peter M. Becker teaches in the sociology department at Concordia, River Forest, and is executive director of CURES (Concordia University Research and Evaluation Services). Dr. Shirley K. Morgenthaler teaches early childhood education at CU-RF and directs the Center for the Study of the Ethical Development of Children and the Children in Worship Study. Dr. Gary L. Bertels has served as a day school teacher, a DCE, and a parish pastor and currently teaches in the theology department at CU-RF.

Children in Worship had its beginnings in the Center for the Study of Children's Ethical Development (CenSCED) at Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois. This Center was begun as the dream of a Concordia philosopher/theologian, Dr. William Lehmann. After teaching *Moral, Ethical, and Spiritual Development of the Child* for numerous years, he concluded that the current developmental literature did not clearly differentiate between the concepts of moral, ethical, and spiritual development. Further, the available developmental literature in these fields virtually ignored the youngest children, focusing instead on older children who could be interviewed more easily.

Based on this perceived need for research on children's ethical and spiritual development, Dr. Lehmann, as the Center's founding director, obtained initial funding for the beginning of CenSCED from the Mary Donnelley Foundation and an anonymous donor. The first activities of

the Center were two research symposia which explored a wide variety of theoretical bases for the development of children's spirituality. These symposia attempted to explain the processes of children's moral, ethical, and/or spiritual development. The proceedings of these research symposia have been edited by Dr. Shirley K. Morgenthaler, the current Director of CenSCED, and are about to be released as a monograph of the Center.

The Children in Worship Project

Following the success of the research symposia, the CenSCED associates turned their attention to identifying and developing a project which would build from the findings and implications of the research symposia. One of the theorists whose work had been cited several times during the research symposia was John Westerhoff. His work appeared to the CenSCED research team to be germane to their concerns related to the study of children's spirituality. His theory, more than others, had aspects which could be applied specifically to the spiritual formation of young children.

The analysis of his theory in terms of researchable concepts and constructs led to the development of the *Children in Worship* study. The formative nature of worship appeared to be a rich field of inquiry to test Westerhoff's theoretical perspective. Westerhoff (1992) postulates that the formation of faith takes place among role models with the presence of ritual and predictability, among other factors. Thus, the research team concluded, formation of faith may take place most powerfully in the context of the body of believers and its role modeling for young children in formation. Furthermore, if role models and context are important formative factors, then worship, the most public and common gathering of believers, ought to be a place to examine and operationalize the ideas of John Westerhoff. Worship, the team concluded, could be studied as an important source for a child's initial moral, ethical, and spiritual development. The research team found, however, that very little research had been conducted on worship practice . from a child's perspective. As a result, CenSCED has begun a multi-phase research project entitled the *Children in Worship* Study (CIW). CIW is focusing on the formative aspects of a child's worship experience and the impact of worship on a child's spiritual development. John Westerhoff's developmental approach to religious belief and practices is central, theoretically, to the design of the research. The Project Director is Shirley K. Morgenthaler, with Gary L. Bertels and Peter M. Becker serving as Associate

Worship, the team concluded, could be studied as an important source for a child's initial moral, ethical, and spiritual development.

Directors. Research staff includes Elizabeth M. Becker, Concordia University Research and Evaluation Services (CURES) Research Associate and Jenni Dzurbala, graduate assistant.

Design of CIW Study One

The study design is intended to examine key aspects of worship in Lutheran churches from the "eyes of a child." Three phases were planned for this research project. These include:

- An initial researchers' conference
- Training of Project Associates and Assistants, and data collection
- Analysis and dissemination

All three phases of this first study have been funded by the Siebert Lutheran Foundation of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

To begin the study, an initial researchers' conference was held in September 1995 at Concordia University, River Forest. Participants included educators, musicians, psychologists, and theologians from the ten institutions of the Concordia University System (CUS), representatives of national Lutheran church bodies, and the project staff.

At the conclusion of the Conference, participants were invited to participate in the research effort as Project Associates. Eleven of those present volunteered to participate in Study One of the CIW Project. Each Associate was to visit at least one congregation personally. In addition, they were asked to recruit and train three Project Assistants from their institutions who would each visit three congregations. A sample of congregations from the three major Lutheran denominations nationally was selected, including those which had early childhood centers and/or elementary schools.

A videotape was developed to standardize the training of Project Assistants by the Project Associates. The videotape focused on the use of three instruments which had been developed and field-tested by the CenSCED Associates. These instruments were:

- CIW Worship Environment Checklist
- CIW Worship Practice Checklist
- CIW Professional Worker Questionnaire

The data collection work of the study was conducted in 1996 at eleven locations across the nation. One hundred Lutheran churches were visited on three consecutive Sundays, during which time services were observed, the physical environment analyzed, and the worship planner interviewed.

The locations of the eleven Project Associates were used as focal points for the selection of the congregations to be used in the study. The areas in and around the following locations were used:

- Austin, TX
- Chicago, IL
- Seward, NE
- Portland, OR
- Irvine, CA
- St. Louis, MO
- Ann Arbor, MI
- St. Paul, MN
- Bronxville, NY (New York City)

- Selma, AL
- Mequon (Milwaukee), WI

The completed instruments were sent to CenSCED where they were entered into a database. After data cleaning, SPSS programs were developed for each of the instruments. The responses to open-ended questions were also added to the study's databases. Worship folders have also been cataloged. The Study's Graduate Assistant, Jennifer Dzurbala, was an integral part of the team for this work.

Initial Analysis

This study is unique in its approach to data analysis. The Project Associates who had overseen data collection in the eleven locations were invited to an analysis conference to begin the interpretation of the initial findings. The core CenSCED team conducted its initial analysis in early 1997. The Project Associates who had led data collection at the outlying sites joined the CenSCED team at an analysis session in April 1997. This meeting involved studying the frequency runs of the three instruments and noting initial reactions to the data. Members of the core CenSCED team led the discussion and analysis for the various sections. The insights, interpretations, and explanations of what was uncovered in the various locations were shared and have helped to shape future analysis of the data.

The highlights of findings and interpretations from the initial analysis have now formed the foundation for the in-depth analysis of the results of each of the instruments used in the study. The following highlights summarize the findings from the initial analysis and the Project Associates' analysis meeting.

Demographics

Congregations

- 62 LCMS
- 27 ELCA
- 11 WELS

Worship Style

- 5% High Liturgical
- 38% Traditional
- 43% Blended
- 10% Contemporary

Schools/Early Childhood Centers (ECC)

- 9% School Only
- 40% Both School and ECC
- 17% ECC Only
- 34% Neither/Missing

The initial goal of the study was to select a sample of LCMS, ELCA, and WELS congregations in a six/three/one ratio. It was gratifying to note that the demographics of the completed data collection sites matched that six/three/one ratio very closely. Further, the research team had hoped to find a diversity of worship styles among the sample congregations. This, too, was accomplished. Finally, since full-time educational agencies are important particularly within both LCMS and WELS church bodies, the research team was pleased to see that the sample

demographics approximated the goal of a 50% sampling of congregations with schools.

Environment Checklist

Westerhoff's theory includes a focus on the importance of context in the faith formation of young children. The Environmental Checklist was designed to look at the physical settings, or contexts, in which worship was conducted. Bertels and Morgenthaler were especially concerned regarding the impact of imagery and iconic representations on children's development of religious understandings. In addition, however, the research team was also concerned with getting a "feel" for the types of settings that exist in current Lutheran congregations. Initial analysis of the checklists revealed these highlights:

- Exterior access for children to worship spaces was high.
- Interior access for children to the sanctuary was quite good.
- Iconic representations are less present than hoped by the research team.
- There were few special arrangements (such as booster seats) for young children.
- Up to 10% did not have a crucifix or cross in the sanctuary.
- There was very little use of scents or presence of aromas in the churches.
- Most congregations had no reserved areas for families, or areas reserved in the rear of the sanctuary.

The results of the data appear to indicate that physical settings for worship are planned by adults for adults and not for children. For example, most had single level floors, which means that younger children have a view blocked by adult backs. Only two congregations had booster seats such as those found in every fast food restaurant. Only four churches reserved family seating in the front.

Finally, the richness of iconic representations that might be found in many historical churches was lacking in many of the churches sampled. Yet, to children who do not read, those iconic representations are visual images which have important nonverbal teaching impacts.

Worship Checklist

Another important aspect of faith formation, according to Westerhoff, is the presence of ritual and predictability. The Worship Checklist was designed to measure the presence or absence of various liturgical elements – ritual and predictability – in worship services. The Associates and Assistants were asked to observe three consecutive Sunday worship sessions in a church. This was designed so that one could determine what is "typical" as opposed to "special" worship experiences of children. Preliminary findings indicate that:

- Children participate more if the congregation operates a school or an early childhood center.
- Older children (age 12 and above) as acolytes (60%) are the most prevalent children's involvement in

congregational worship.

- The children's message is a common form of including children in worship (40%).
- Participation in children's choir (30%) is another frequent form of involvement.
- Children of the congregation are brought to communion with their parents more often than they are invited forward to witness a baptism.
- Participation of lay members of the congregation is limited. Lay readers are the highest frequency of participation at 50% of congregations.
- Many congregations limit children's participation to special services such as Christmas.
- Communion services are different from non-communion.
- Some "traditional" liturgical elements are missing in the worship of many congregations.

For most children, worship is a "spectator" activity. Worship is done by adults for adults. Older children can light candles; younger children can come forward for "their" message; and they can "perform" at holidays. But, on most Sundays children can "watch," if they can find a sight line. Liturgies, which contain elements which often need to be explained to children, vary so frequently children may not ever find a pattern. This may delay formative acquisition of the ritual of the worship experience. Finally, the "majesty" of the worship liturgy which some adults have found highly formative is less present than expected.

Worship Planner Interview

A third element of Westerhoff's theory is the intentionality of adults in the "enculturation" of young children and new Christians into the community of believers. Thus, the final instrument used was an interview schedule designed to gain the perspective of the person who did worship planning for the church. Questions regarding that individual's understanding of children's role and perspective in worship were asked. Following are some of the highlighted preliminary findings.

- The pastor or senior pastor most frequently plans worship (85%).
- Children's perspectives in that planning were considered "very important" by 33% of planners, "somewhat important" by 55%, and "slightly important" or "not important" by 11% of those participating in the interview.
- Children's perspectives were judged to be "very important" to congregation members 26% of the time. Children's perspectives were perceived to be "somewhat important" 53% of the time, and "slightly" or "not important" 21% of the time.
- Inclusion of a children's sermon was cited as the most popular method of planning for and involving children.
- A communion blessing also cited as

a way of involving children in worship.

It is clear that some recognition of children's presence in worship is present among those who plan worship. However, it is limited to special events: children's sermons, joining parents during communion or a baptism, or special services on holidays.

Children enter the consideration of the worship planner only slightly more than that person perceives their importance to the membership. The attenders at the initial analysis conference suggest that the high response to considering children's perspectives "somewhat important" really is the "politically correct" answer. Their impression was that the actual valuing of children's perspectives in the planning of worship was lower than that. There is some evidence that children are more salient to worship planning in those churches with schools and/or early childhood centers.

Some recognition of children's presence in worship is present among those who plan worship. However, it is limited to special events: children's sermons, joining parents during communion or a baptism, or special services on holidays.

Future Data Reports

The reflections on findings on the three instruments used in the CIW study are clearly preliminary, and based on initial data analysis. The research team is in the process of studying each of the instrument results in greater depth. Those results will be published in future articles which will explore each set of data in turn.

While the data being reported are for Lutherans in general, there is some evidence that differences exist between church bodies, as well as between congregations with or without schools and early childhood centers. Additional data collection will allow the researchers to verify these perceptions. CenSCED Associates also hope to have interested parties in other traditions use the instruments and share comparative data. This will allow the researchers to expand interpretation of the data in general and to develop additional inferences and conclusions.

After the initial analysis is completed by the research team at CenSCED, each of the Project Associates will receive access to the data bases so that they may pursue their individual research interests. It is the hope of the CenSCED team that they will also share the data bases with their students to expand the analyses undertaken.

Future CIW Project Studies

The next studies in the Children in Worship series are in the planning phase. These studies have grown out of the work of CenSCED's Associates and the CIW

Project Associates. Identified as Study Two is an observational study focusing on children's actual behavior during worship, including video taping both of the service and of children's behavior during the service. Study Three, which may be combined with Study Two if sufficient funding can be found, will be interviews with children to determine their perceptions of – and reactions to – worship.

These two studies are planned as preliminary strategies to assess which activities children find meaningful and worshipful from their perspective, rather than from adults' interpretations of their perspectives.

Concluding Comments

Study One of the Children in Worship project is still in the initial stages of analysis. Each of the three CenSCED team members at Concordia will take the lead in analysis of the data in one of the instruments during summer 1997. Initial reports will be released in late 1997 and early 1998. Initial interest in the findings has already been expressed by musicians, educators, and synodical staffs of the three Lutheran bodies. Several researchers hope to replicate the study in other denominational settings.

The research team will be seeking funding for Studies Two and Three over the next several months. In addition, replications of Study One across denominations are objects of potential funding to be sought in the coming months.

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Note: Readers interested in the CIW study may request copies of the instruments used in Study One for a nominal fee by contacting the Center at:

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Sherman Korshavn

An Identity Problem? Law, Gospel, and Lutheran Schools

The Rev. Sherman Korshavn is principal of First Lutheran School of Los Angeles.

Is there an identity problem in our Lutheran schools? Some would say there definitely is. They would note that there are Lutheran schools presenting themselves primarily as private schools offering quality education, some omitting Lutheran from their names. Others, in an attempt to reach farther into a broader basis in their community, present themselves as Christian Schools and claim membership in one of the Christian school organizations. In such situations it is easy for the distinctiveness and unique qualities of Lutheran education to disappear.

Weekly chapel services, Lutheran religion curriculum and Lutheran teachers and administrators are important characteristics of a Lutheran school, but, in and by themselves, they can fall short, failing to establish or produce the unique character and spiritual strength that should be inherent in Lutheran education.

To know our identity as Lutheran schools, to be able to articulate our faith with a clear, positive and uncompromising voice we need to uncover, to recover our past, "to find our roots." With all the voices and emphases clamoring in the market

place of ideas, with all the faith and church policy proclamations of ecclesiastical authorities, we need to have a clear, a lucid understanding of where we came from, of what our faith history is, of who we are. If we do not know where we came from, we shall never know who we are or where we are supposed to go.

Our first step as individuals and as Lutheran schools must take us back to Martin Luther and to the Reformation. Our spiritual roots are in Martin Luther's Holy Spirit lead rediscovery of the Gospel in the sixteenth century, that great faith defining event that powerfully points us to the very center of the Christian faith. It is here that we must return to establish our identity as Lutherans, as Lutheran schools. It is here in a renewed understanding of Luther's defining of Law and Gospel that our identity is formed.

The Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel is the solid cornerstone of Lutheran education, giving Lutheran schools their unique identity and offering them the opportunity to make a distinctive contribution to Christian education. As this understanding is permitted to permeate the life and teaching of the Lutheran school community, the underlying philosophy of community life, its government, its instruction and its message (and messengers) will experience change and enrichment, giving to Lutheran education a unique quality.

The Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel does not happen casually. It is the result of very direct and intentional activity within the Lutheran education community, beginning in schools of higher education and continuing in local Lutheran education associations and parishes. There needs to be open study and discussion that will enable teachers and administrators to grow in an awareness of how our understanding of Law and Gospel underlies and enriches what we teach and how we teach it.

Inherent in this thought are questions: Are our teachers ready, prepared to teach the faith from a Lutheran perspective? What can we offer through in-service training to assist them in this area? I remember a fine Christian sixth grade teacher, teaching in a school to which I came many years ago, who came to me and said, "I am a Baptist Christian. My faith is important to me. I cannot accept the Lutheran teaching on Baptism. I could not teach it with conviction. When this comes up in the religion curriculum I want you to teach those lessons. It is only fair to the students and to me." I could appreciate the teacher's position and frankness. I taught the lessons and we engaged in some frank and open discussions regarding the faith we taught and lived.

I remember another sixth grade teacher I hired from Concordia, Seward. A parsonage home and solid preparation in college enabled this teacher to teach the faith in a classroom community in a way that evidenced a deep understanding of Law and Gospel. In that classroom was a student from India. The students were encouraged to share their concepts of God. The young scholar shared his belief that God was a god who had to be

pleased by good works, which he recorded; a god he must obey; a god who punished when a person did wrong; a god of whom he was afraid. There were elements of this concept of God that other students also reflected.

During the school year this young teacher faithfully taught the Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel, of sin and grace as he lead his students into discoveries of who they were: sinners saved by the grace of God through the salvation act on Calvary. He made Luther's seminal statements of faith come alive for his students. Those of us who memorized Luther's Small Catechism can well recall what Luther teaches us there: "I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death. That I might be his own, live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as he is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true."

> The Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel is the solid cornerstone of Lutheran education, giving Lutheran schools their unique identity and offering them the opportunity to make a distinctive contribution to Christian education.

At the close of the year the students again were given the opportunity to share their concepts of God. The young scholar from India shared that God was a God who loved and forgave him when he did things that were wrong. When asked how he knew this, his response was a simple, but profound, "Because Jesus died for me and paid for my sin." That summer the family moved 30 miles away. In September, after school had begun, the frantic father of the boy called to ask if his son could return. He was enrolled in a fine public school, but they did not teach about Jesus. His Hindu father stated his son had become a Christian in our school and he needed to be in a school that taught about Jesus.

Both teachers were strong, able teachers. Both had strong Christian convictions and their lives reflected their deep faith. I appreciated both of them.

Looking back after all these years, I remember that one of them had a deep appreciation of the Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel. The other did not. And it was my responsibility as a Lutheran educator to provide opportunities for all of my staff members to gain that understanding, something that I did not do well. That understanding doesn't come through osmosis. It comes through intentional,

directed study.

We recognize that the understanding of our Lutheran faith stops for many Lutherans at Confirmation. During my parish ministry years I encouraged church council members to participate in one twelve-week "Essentials of Faith" series during their council term. These were preparation for membership classes. Not only did this series bring them into contact with new members with whom they were studying, but, as they shared with me, they also learned much they had forgotten or had missed in adolescent confirmation classes. Similar study programs could help our teachers. This should be a part of teacher orientation for teachers from non-Lutheran backgrounds.

We also need to reach out to the parents of our students to help them to know and appreciate our Lutheran emphasis. For years new parent orientation included a strong request and earnest encouragement for parents to participate in a ten session study course in which they could learn about the faith that their children were being taught, for we do unashamedly teach the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective. New parents who hadn't participated received an invitation each time a new series began. Many parents expressed appreciation for those classes. For years, 75% of the accessions in that congregation came out of those classes.

We also need to reach out to our students with a strong Lutheran religion curriculum that articulates the foundation of our faith. For many years eighth grade religion classes were taught by the principal who used the Scriptures and the Catechism as a framework to teach the Christian faith from the Lutheran perspective, but it wasn't called "Confirmation Class." Also, the teaching was sensitive to and recognized that in some areas, such as the sacraments, there were differences in beliefs among Christians and we were presenting the Lutheran understanding. At the conclusion of our studies regarding the sacrament of Holy Baptism, there often were students asking to be baptized. Some of these students came from devout Baptist-oriented homes and churches. Their parents and pastors were called, and I discussed our program and the students' request with them. This strengthened our ties to those churches. It also gave those pastors an opportunity to continue a ministry to those students. I was given invitations to some of those baptisms. Some students requesting baptism were from unchurched homes. This offered us an open door to minister to those families.

Like Sunday morning children's sermons, our chapel messages need to reach children with a message that reflects a Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel. It's so easy to yield to the temptation to make them morality lessons. School chapel messages, like Sunday children's sermons, are hard work, especially if you try to reach pre-K through grade eight in one chapel service. Chapel time can be an opportunity to help to proclaim the message of salvation, rooting and deepening our students in the faith.

There are other opportunities to witness to the faith that makes us Lutheran: our counseling of students in disciplinary situations, our conferences with parents, the atmosphere in our classrooms, our handling of disagreements among students and among staff members, our competitive spirit on the athletic field or floor. We need to be intentional in our meeting of the many challenges to witness to Luther's understanding of Law and Gospel in these situations. This will happen as "the Holy Spirit enlightens me with his gifts" (Luther's Small Catechism).

An epilogue: As I was attempting to write this article, I was interrupted by a dentist from Sioux Falls, who called regarding our contribution to Augustana College, my wife's alma mater. In the course of the conversation he noted, "Our task at Auggie is to point the way to Christ." That is our task as Lutheran educators at every level, preschool through college. I believe we can do that best when we go back to our roots, when we remember who we are. We are Lutheran schools, reflecting a Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel, whose main task is to "point the way to Christ."

"Finally, I am convinced that we are not called upon to succeed at anything in this ministry. We are called upon to love. Which is to say, we are called upon to fail -- both vigorously and joyfully."

Walter Wangerin, Jr., *Ragman and Other Cries of Faith*

"A philosophy [of teaching] with no implications for practice is only useless, but a collection of activities or techniques with no philosophy to control and direct them may well be dangerous."

Robert Probst, Georgia State University

Jeffrey Burkart

Using Drama in School Chapel Services; or, Finding the "Script" in Scripture

Dr. Jeffrey E. Burkart is Professor of Educational Communications/Media at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN. His recent publications include The Sonday School Book: Ideas and Techniques for Teaching the Faith *(1995);* Sure Can Use a Little Good News: 12 Gospel Plays in Rhyme *(1996);* "Man Overboard!: A Musical Based on the Book of Jonah *(1995);* Services for Creative Worships 1995-1997. "Don't Get Burned!": A Musical Based on the Three Men in the Fiery Furnace *will be published in November, 1997.*

Let's put on a show!

These famous words, usually uttered by Mickey Rooney to Judy Garland near the end of every Andy Hardy movie, signaled that something spectacular was about to happen. When someone was in trouble, you could always "put on a show" to solve the problem. Putting on the show brought people together in a common cause that always saved the day (at least in the world of Hollywood). Most day school dramatic efforts probably won't be able to match the "glitz" of a Hollywood production, but they can be the means through which children grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually as they learn to use their God-given talents to proclaim the Gospel.

Last February I worked with a group of twenty-six seventh and eighth grade students at King of Kings Lutheran School where my youngest son, Andrew (a seventh grader) attends. I wrote a short drama based on the parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-23) that I sent to my

son's teacher, Mr. Zum Hofe, in early January. He assigned parts and made sure everyone memorized their lines before I came in as guest director to put some "final touches" on the performance. The two-hour rehearsal included blocking (where to stand, when to enter and exit, how to face the audience, etc.); timing of lines (actors must "jump" on their cue lines so there is no "silence gap" between lines); vocal projection and articulation;[1] and finally, a discussion of the meaning of the parable and the Gospel message that all have been invited by God to his banquet hall through the saving grace given to us through the death and resurrection of our Lord.

The children rehearsed for the next two weeks under their teacher's direction and performed the play during their regular school chapel service and as part of a drama event for Lutheran school children held at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota. It was a positive experience for everyone involved, and it reinforced something that most educators already know: drama and activities associated with it can be powerful vehicles for the proclamation of the Gospel. This holds true not only for elementary school children but for secondary and college students as well.

> Nowhere is drama and the dramatic process more important than in the service of the Gospel.

Drama is a potent educational tool because it involves the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning while simultaneously cutting across curricular boundaries. Whenever students "hit the stage" something special happens to them: they take what they are doing seriously and create memories that last a lifetime. This is especially true when students participate in dramatic activities within worship settings.

An Involving Art Form

Drama is an involving art form that literally means *to do* or *to act.* It abhors passivity and encourages spoken language, storytelling, movement (dance, acrobatics, etc.), cooperative learning, memorization, reading for meaning, creative writing, and other artistic expression. Dramatic activities help students to work together to perform Gospel-centered plays that can entertain (in the best sense of the word) and enlighten both the actors and the audience (Burkart 1995a). My son and his classmates attested to this; their dramatic experience gave them the opportunity to creatively express the Good News to one another and to a wider audience as well. By *acting out* the parable, they came to a better understanding of the story and the message of the Gospel. I know this because many of them told me how important the experience was to them. When we *act out* the story, it becomes part of us. As the proverb says, "I hear and I forget. I see and I understand. I do

important the experience was to them. When we *act out* the story, it becomes part of us. As the proverb says, "I hear and I forget. I see and I understand. I do and it becomes a part of me forever."

Some New Research

Nowhere is drama and the dramatic process more important than in the service of the Gospel. Children have traditionally taken part in dramatic activities during festival services (Christmas Eve, Good Friday and Easter) but that's often where their dramatic contributions end. One might assume that school chapel services would provide greater opportunity for children to participate in drama (dramatic readings of scripture, short plays based on Bible stories, puppet dramas, interpretive readings of the scripture, Bible storytelling, echo pantomimes, etc.). However, recent research indicates that school chapel services do not involve children in dramatic activities to the extent one might expect.

A nationwide study of children in worship conducted by the Center for the Study of Children's Ethical Development (CenSCED) reveals that in 50% of the schools surveyed, children in Lutheran schools rarely or never perform dramas in school chapel services.[2] In addition, the research shows that children's reading of scripture texts occurs in chapel services only about 50% of the time and leadership of chapel services by students occurs on a regular basis about 32% of the time.[3] A preliminary analysis of the data indicates that children's "up front" worship involvement could be significantly increased. This is especially true of participation which lends itself to dramatic involvement: i.e., oral reading and dramatic interpretation of texts, choral reading, dramas based on parables and Bible stories, movement, pantomime, dance, etc.

Dramatically Increasing Involvement

Here's a short bullet list of ideas to stimulate your thinking regarding the use of drama in chapel services at your Lutheran school and in Sunday worship as well. Think about how you might involve students of all ages in writing and performing these dramatic ideas (don't forget about involving Lutheran school secondary students as writers and performers where possible).

- Using the pericopes of the week, have your students write a choral reading based on the Introit, Psalm or other readings. Here's an example based on Psalm 98 with movement directions in parentheses:

#1:	Sing! Sing to the LORD! (With enthusiasm and strength)
#2:	Sing a new song to the LORD!
#3:	For He has done marvelous things;
#4:	His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him. (Raise hands)
ALL:	**Sing to the Lord a new song!**
# 1:	The Lord has made His salvation known and revealed His righteousness to the nations!
# 2:	He has remembered His love and

His faithfulness to the house of Israel!

3: He has shown His salvation to the ends of the earth! (Open arms toward audience)

ALL: Sing to the Lord a new song!

#4: Shout for joy to the Lord all the earth! (Speaking with loud voice – not a yell)

1: Burst into jubilant song with music of the harp, (Increase volume with each phrase)

2: With sound of singing,

3: With trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn —

ALL: Shout for joy before the Lord, the King!

4: Shout with joy before the Lord and sing. Sing a new song!

1: Let the sea and everything in it resound.

2: Let the world and all who are in it be found rejoicing.

3: Let the rivers clap their hands,

4: Let ev'ry mountain that stands on the earth sing joyfully before the LORD!

ALL: For He comes to judge the earth in righteousness!

1: He comes to judge the peoples with equity.

2: Glory be to the Father (Point to sky)

3: and to the Son (Point to the ground)

4: and to the Holy Spirit; (Point from side to side to complete the sign of the cross)

1: as it was in the beginning, (Fold hands in prayer)

2: is now,

3: and will be forever,

ALL: Amen! Sing! Sing to the Lord a new song! (Open hands to heaven and look up to heaven) (Burkart 1996a)[4]

Older students can both write and perform these kinds of choral readings, but younger students should not be left out. Pre-K through second graders can memorize refrains (Sing to the Lord a new song!) and rehearse with older children before the service. The more involvement by students of all ages the better!

- Have students get into small groups to write an echo pantomime based on Bible stories or parables. Here's how: 1) Have one student read the story aloud as the others listen; 2) Have students read the story silently to themselves; 3) As students discuss the story, one student writes down short phrases that tell the story; 4) The other students make suggestion as to what should be said and what pantomime gestures are appropriate (hands, face, whole body movement) to illustrate and amplify the story's action; 5) The group performs the story for the class by reading the lines and performing the actions; the rest of the class repeats the words and actions immediately after the actors speak and move (Burkart 1995b, pp. 37-53).

The writing of the echo pantomime script usually takes longer than expected. Students can use their creativity to tell the story from various points of view. For example, if they tell the "Parable of the

Sower" they might do it from the sower's point of view like this (with pantomime actions in parentheses):

I got up this mornin.' (stretch with both arms) — audience repeats (echoes) words and actions.

And I put on my overalls. (pull on overalls) — echo.

And my farmer's cap. (put on a cap) — echo.

And I picked up my bag of seeds. (pick up bag) — echo.

And went into my field to sow my seeds. (broadcast seeds with wide sweeping gesture) — echo.

Some of my seeds fell on a path. (point to ground) — echo.

Then some birds came along. (put fingers under armpits and make a flapping wing gesture with arms) — echo.

And chomp, chomp, chomp. (keep wing gesture as you nod head with each "chomp") — echo.

They ate it all up. (hold both hands up in gesture of despair) — echo.

So . . . I sowed some more seed . . . (broadcast seeds with wide sweeping gesture) — echo.

Now you finish the story yourself. I think that you will find that students will ask lots of questions about the story and will see new things in it even though they may have heard it many times before. The process of writing words and actions will stimulate the imagination and help the children to see the story in a new way. It provides you and your students an opportunity to discuss the meaning of the story from a variety of viewpoints and helps to cement both the story and its meaning in the minds and hearts of the children.

- Puppets, in all their forms (hand puppets, marionettes, cardboard tube, spoon, milk carton, paper bag, paper plate, sock puppets, etc.) are easy for children to make and delightful to use with children of all ages. Almost everything that you do in an echo pantomime can also be done with puppets. Puppet plays can be performed with tape-recorded accompaniment or read aloud from scripts that are attached to the puppeteer's side of the puppet stage (or curtain) for convenience.

Try the "Parable of the Good Samaritan." It has a great plot and interesting characters (the robbers, the snooty Priest and Levite, the Samaritan and the donkey, the innkeeper and, of course, Jesus and the teacher of the law). Remember that you can amplify the dialog for dramatic effect. Have the Priest and Levite give excuses as to why they can't stop. For example: Priest: "So sorry! I have an appointment that I must keep. I'm speaking to the Society for Safe Highway Travel, and I can't be late."

Adding dialogue helps children ask questions about why people do the things they do. It gives them another way of discussing the text and seeking the meaning behind the original story. Almost any Arch Book can be turned into a rhyming play. Just assign parts and you have a play or readers theater ready to go. Of course, you must rehearse! (Burkart, 1996a)

- Write a Bible story in story form and

then assign parts to narrators and characters. A story play can be done as a readers theater, a "full blown" memorized play, a puppet drama, a solo dramatic reading or in any other form you and your students have the inclination to create (Nadasdy, 1996; Schroeder, 1996). Here's a story play to use as an example:

Philip and the Ethiopian Treasurer
Based on Acts 8:26-39 (Fifth Sunday of Easter-Series B)

Narrator 1: Once upon a time there was a man named Philip. Philip was a follower of the Lord Jesus who preached the Good News wherever he went. It so happened one day that God sent an angel to speak to Philip. The angel of the Lord told Philip to take a trip down the desert road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza.

Nar. 2: As he traveled on his way, Philip happened along a man from Ethiopia who was sitting in his chariot reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah. The man from Ethiopia, as it turns out, was a very important official in the employ of the queen of Ethiopia. He was in charge of the treasury and was a man of considerable reputation, intelligence, and power.

Nar. 3: He had made the long trip from the upper Nile River valley to worship at the temple in Jerusalem. The Ethiopian was a God-fearing man, but, like so many of us, did not always understand the ways of the Lord and was sometimes confused about what God would have us do.

Nar. 1: No sooner had Philip spied the Ethiopian, than the Spirit of the Lord told him to go over to the chariot and stay as close to the Ethiopian as he could. Philip ran up to the chariot and craned his neck to overhear what the Ethiopian treasurer was saying. At first, it seemed that he was talking to himself, but as Philip drew nearer he could hear the Ethiopian reading aloud from the book of Isaiah. The man read:

Ethiopian: "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth, he was led like a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before his shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. He was humiliated and deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth."

Nar. 2: The Ethiopian shook his head and wondered about what he had read. To him it was most puzzling.

Nar. 3: Philip interrupted the Ethiopian's musings.

Philip: "Ahem!"

Nar. 1: Philip began,

Philip: "Do you understand what you're reading, if I may ask?"

Nar. 2: The startled Ethiopian replied,

Eth::"How can I unless someone explains it to me!?"

Philip: "Would you mind if I gave it a try?"

Nar. 1: Philip asked.

Philip: "Not at all, not at all!"
Nar. 2: the Ethiopian said. And he invited Philip to climb into his spacious chariot and have a seat.
Eth.: "Tell me, please."
Nar. 3: said the Ethiopian,
Eth.: "who is the prophet talking about? Is he referring to himself or somebody else?"
Nar. 1: As the chariot bounced down the road, Philip, beginning with the very passage that the Ethiopian had read, started to explain the Good News of salvation. He told about the love of God and how Jesus had been born as a baby in Bethlehem, and how he had grown in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.
Nar. 2: He told about the signs and wonders that Jesus did and how finally he was crucified, died, and was buried. And then he spoke of the resurrection of Christ from the dead and life everlasting.
Nar. 3: He spoke of Christ's command to baptize all nations and proclaim the Good News to the ends of the earth. He spoke of the forgiveness of sins and how it was Jesus who was the Lamb of God who had taken away the sins of the world.
Nar. 1: As they traveled, they happened upon a pool of water alongside the road.
Eth.: "Look,"
Nar. 2: the Ethiopian said,
Eth.: "here is some water. Why should I not be baptized right now!?"
Philip: "Why not indeed?"
Nar. 3: said Philip with great enthusiasm.
Nar. 1: And so the Ethiopian commanded his chauffeur to stop the chariot. He and Philip got out and went down into the water where Philip baptized the Ethiopian in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Nar. 2: No sooner had they stepped out of the water, when the Spirit of the Lord quickly took Philip away — the Ethiopian never saw him again. But what's more important is that the Ethiopian believed that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He knew that Jesus was his Lord and his God. And so the Ethiopian treasurer went on his way rejoicing and praising God saying . . . (or singing)
Eth.: Thank the Lord and sing His praise; Tell ev'ryone what he has done. Let ev'ryone who seeks the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name. He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia!
Nar. 3: And he lived happily and forever after and told this story to everyone he could.
Entire cast: And so should you! Alleluia, al-le, al-le-lu![5]

When you and your students write a script like the one above, you will find that lots of study and thought goes into the final product. When you perform these kinds of plays you can go all out with costumes, makeup, sets, etc., or keep

it simple with a readers theater approach.[6] Either way, you will glean greater meaning from the original text and help others to experience the joy of the Gospel message.

There are plenty of great scripts to be found in the Scriptures. God's blessings as you search for them and create dramatic new ways to proclaim the Good News in your Lutheran chapel services.

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1. We've all sat through performances where we've been frustrated by poor enunciation and projection. Even the best public address system will fail if students mumble under their breath. The cure is often tedious, but it must be patiently administered nonetheless. Insist on articulate speech that is spoken from the diaphragm, not merely the throat. (A tip: To help students project their voice, ask them to pretend that a thick wooden door stands between them and the audience. Have them speak, but not yell, as if they were trying to talk to someone on the other side of the door.) Practice this early and often in the place where the play will be performed. At the first sign that students are wavering in audible and articulate vocal production, stop them and have them redo their lines. Be insistent and consistent in teaching them how to speak clearly; they will eventually rise to the challenge. That's why we rehearse! Don't allow yourself to be lulled into complacency on this point. Stick to your guns and be insistent without being angry or abusive. Students will thank you for it and so will your audience.

2. Children in Worship - Study One (1997). The Center for the Study of Children's Ethical Development (CenSCED). River Forest, Illinois. The breakdown for the category "children perfoin worship in Lutheran school chapel services" is as follows: 21.7% never; 28,3% rarely; 6.5% festival only; 37% weekly; 6.5% monthly.

There is reason to rejoice in the knowledge that 43.5% of children have a weekly or monthly experience with drama, but there is lots of room for more participation in drama by children in Lutheran school settings. The Children in Worship - Study One was designed to describe the current situation faced by children in worship in Lutheran congregations nation-wide. The study included congregations and schools from LC-MS, ELCA and WELS congregations. An overview of the Children in Worship study appears in this issue of *Lutheran Education.*

3. The results for the category "children lead worship in day school chapel services" are as follows: never lead 44.5%; rarely lead 18.2%; lead at festivals only 4.5%; lead monthly 22.7%; lead weekly 9.1%. For the category "children read Scripture text in day school chapel services": read text never 35.6%; rarely read text 15.6%; read text at festival only 2.2%; read text monthly 22.2%; read text weekly 24.4%.

4. Copyright by Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission. See pages 106-184 for examples of mini-dramas and dramatic choral readings based on the "O Antiphons."

5. *The Ethiopian Treasurer*, copyright 1997 by Jeffrey E. Burkart, may be used in your school or church. Please give copyright notice in your church bulletin. The Post-Communion Canticle, "Thank the Lord . . .," is taken from *Lutheran Worship*, page 192. Copyright 1982 by Concordia Publishing House. Used by Permission.

6. For a comprehensive text that contains many suggestions on using drama with children, see McCaslin (1996). For some canny insights and a good bibliography about drama for teachers who have reservations about using drama, see Frances Sims Hardy (1994).

Wayne Lucht

The Enemy's Name is Apathy

Dr. Wayne Lucht taught psychology at Concordia University, River Forest, for many years and edited Lutheran Education *for ten years until his retirement this spring. This article was originally written in December of 1965.*

If you have no problems with apathy among your pupils toward the religion period, these comments are not for you.

If your pupils come bright-eyed and bushy-tailed to the study of God's Word, with relevant and penetrating questions and thoughts about the subject for study and eagerness to dig into it, then don't read any farther. This article is intended for what may be (though we hope not) the majority experience.

Perhaps the last statement is unfair in light of the remarkable absence of quantifiable evidence. We have not yet learned how to measure apathy. We just recognize it when it exists. Yet even the most skilled teachers have encountered this great enemy.

Let us from the outset establish that if the situation exists, if apathy is the enemy to face in reaching the goals of grace, we must for a change keep from hauling out old excuses to explain and justify the situation. We will not lean on the shortness of the instructional period, the "amateurishness" of teaching volunteers in the Sunday School program, nor the repetition of the material to explain away the uncomfortable fact that too many of our children come to the religion class expecting to be bored.

And they *expect* to be bored because they have *learned* to be bored.

Some time ago I had the opportunity to discuss

the matter of successful teaching with the best possible source: a successful teacher. I asked her what she did in the short Sunday morning period that produced such eager and intelligent discussion, such spiritual awareness on the part of her pupils.

She obligingly rattled off a list of things she and the children did in connection with the lesson. For example, the children would outline prayers during the week, exchange the outlines during the lesson, and "pray each other's prayers." This was followed by a discussion of the quality of the prayers and praying.

Or they came to class where the topic concerned difficult decisions for children of God to make. They were to have prepared situations in their own lives where decisions to act as children of God had been hard for them to make.

She mentioned that the children had also prepared Bible passages for sick or confined people to take comfort from, writing them on three-by-five cards and binding them together to be brought to the shut-ins on a visit.

The more she talked, the more it became apparent that the list of activities was *not* the reason she was successful as a teacher. Having exciting and relevant things to do is, of course, part of the war against apathy. Being a well-prepared teacher is an absolute requirement if apathy is to be defeated. But neither together nor in themselves are they enough. Reasons why in a moment.

In one of the most illuminating papers delivered one summer at a Lutheran Education Association convention, Perry LeFevre addressed a sectional on the theme, "The Language of Relationships." He boldly struck out at the assumption that what we do in religion instruction is simply transmit a belief system as if it were any other kind of viewpoint that could be presented and discussed dispassionately.

In opposition to that position, he quoted Professor George Coe as saying, "Christian education will consist fundamentally in providing for children conditions in which love is experience, practiced, wrought into steady and deliberate living by the help of both intellectual analysis and habit formation and developed into a faith that illumines the crises and mysteries of life."

That sounds innocent enough — nothing really new here. And yet there are embedded concerns that may give us a few uncomfortable moments.

It may very well be possible that we have been blithely excusing ourselves from dull classes along the following lines: "Well, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to induce faith, something quite above any powers I might have. As long as the Gospel is involved or proclaimed in the lesson, I'll leave the rest to him."

Or another: "I know that the children would be more interested if we could talk about things that have happened to them and what it means to live a life in Christ. But this might border on works righteousness, and that would undercut the whole doctrine of justification by faith alone."

Now both of these statements have just enough truth in them to be pernicious. The important point to note is

that both positions clearly are lined up on the side of "Transmissive Theory Alone" as the *sine qua non* of religious education.

Both statements bleach out the vitality of the relationship between teacher and pupils as being relatively unnecessary in the process of Gospel proclamation. That is, what happens *between* the teacher and the pupils is thought to be of much less significance than filling the air with certain words.

Are words and symbols to be disregarded then? No, definitely not, since God has uniquely revealed himself to us through his Son, the Word made flesh. This knowledge cannot be generated by man alone.

But it *does* mean that words and symbols are to come with or after the concrete experiences of their meaning. Or, as Horace Bushnell once said of the Christian faith, "Have it first in yourselves, then teach it as you live it, teach it by living it, for you can do it in no other manner."

Too often we are tempted to "argue" our children into heaven by an exquisite theological disputation. We hold classes in Theological Anatomy where we thrill to dissect the body of doctrine only to discover what the children already sense: we have a cadaver on our hands. The lesson has turned into a mournful wake.

In striking fashion, LeFevre put it this way: "Communication in a primary sense takes place through encounter between persons rather than as an exchange of words. . . . Faith is not something primarily objective or intellectual. It is a living personal relationship. Love is not an idea; it too is a relationship. Hope is a relationship — oriented to a fuller future in relation to God. So too are the processes of reconciliation and forgiveness. These relationships God-ward have their parallel at the human level in the relationships between persons. Indeed, the God relationship is communicated in and through the contact of human relationships. The language of words grows out of the concrete relationships between man and man and must continue to be rooted in them if the words are to be fully comprehended. The failure of so much Christian education lies in teaching merely the words apart from their reference to the concrete relationships. Their meaning does not get through. Of themselves, they cannot change life."

Getting back to our successful Sunday School teacher, we see how this is applicable. After she completed naming her list of activities, I mentioned to her that I knew a number of teachers who were as clever as she with "projects" and "creative approaches" but who did not experience her success with children.

Being a modest person, she was temporarily confused.

"Do you think it makes any difference that I like them and respect them — and let them know it?"

Administrative Talk

by Glen Kuck

Servant Leadership

In his book *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories*, James Finn Garner (1994) retells the story of Little Red Riding Hood. In Garner's modernized version of the old story, a passing wood chopper person hears Red Riding Hood's screams. Wanting to do anything he can to help, he bursts into the cottage. A startled Red Riding Hood hollers at the wood chopper, "And just what do you think you're doing? Bursting in here like a Neanderthal, trusting your weapon to do your thinking for you . . . how dare you assume that womyn and wolves can't solve their own problems without a man's help!" Grandma then jumps out of the wolf's mouth, snatches the wood chopper person's ax, and cuts his head off. The story ends with Red Riding Hood, Grandma, and the wolf deciding to set up an alternative household based on mutual respect and cooperation, living happily ever after (pp. 1-4).

Administrators can identify with the wood chopper person. They labor to help in any way they can, only to have their heads figuratively chopped off. It doesn't take long for new administrator to find out that they are more often of sorrowful servants than stately leaders. There's little room for arrogance in the world of educational administration.

E. Grady Bogue has authored an engrossing book called *The Enemies of Leadership*. Among the enemies he discusses is the attitude of arrogance. He writes that some administrators fall prey to the seductive call of public adulation. These leaders need a constant barrage of praise as affirmation of their leadership achievement. As a consequence, their effectiveness as administrators is diminished.

Effective leaders, on the other hand, have found meaning in their lives beyond the need for acclaim and are therefore free to be what Bogue (1985) calls servant leaders. Such leaders are able to set aside the need for public adulation. They see their mission in terms of serving, not being served. Being a servant leader is not a sign of weakness. Bogue writes: "The servant leader is not a stranger to power. He simply realizes that power is an instrument awaiting the engagement of more important questions: For what end, for what purpose, for what meaning will power be employed? Growth, public approval, mobility, activity, power — all these can be appropriate indicators of leadership achievement. However, the servant leader keeps these indicators in balance and holds a more complete vision of leadership effectiveness" (pp. 99-100).

Bogue cites four characteristics of effective servant leaders. Among them is the ability to be compassionate to all the people who comprise the school family. An effective administrator realizes that the school functions because of the dedication of the teachers, staff, parents, and students. He needs them every bit as much as they need him. He understands that the hard-working custodian deserves the same smiles, warmth, and gratitude as those higher up on the educational totem pole.

Another is the ability and willingness to absorb the hostility of the ill-informed and ill-mannered. Though one of the hardest tasks given an administrator, the need to deal tactfully with an unappreciative public is crucial. There is a verse from the old Charles Albert Tindley spiritual "Stand by Me" that goes, "When I do the best I can/ And my friends misunderstand/ Thou who knowest all about me/ Stand by me." Sometimes faith in God is the only thing that gets an administrator through those gut-wrenching times of rancor and controversy. The strength of a good leader sometimes lies in the ability to "take it" without thoughts of malice or vengeance.

A third characteristic is the willingness to have one's daily routine interrupted and to understand that dealing with interruptions is an important element of an administrator's job description. An effective leader gets out of the office as much as possible and exposes himself to what's happening in the classrooms, the hallways, the gym, the boiler room, and the kitchen. He uses the opportunities engendered by interruptions to learn more about the people around him and to lend a hand to those in need.

Lastly, a sensitive use of authority is cited. A leader who uses the authority vested in him to serve rather than to be served is one who will inspire similar responses in others (Bogue, 1985, pp. 100-102).

There is little use for egotistical administrators. An effective leader quietly, consistently, lovingly works long hours behind the scenes to make the school the best it can be.

That wood chopper probably would have made a good administrator — had he lived

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"The great Skill of a Teacher is to get and keep the Attention of his Scholar; whilst he has that, he is sure to advance as fast as the Learner's Abilities will carry him; and without that, all his Bustle and Pother will be to little or no Purpose."

John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education,* 1693

Children at Worship

by Susan Wente

Hymns for Chapel - Some Planning Strategies

A new school year brings with it a new year of chapel services to plan. Chapel is a time for a Lutheran school to confirm its identity as a worshiping community and to continue its ongoing mission of being a learning community. Here Lutheran teachers have the opportunity to do what they do best: set goals for their students, construct a sound curriculum, and carefully plan to help children reach those goals.

Worship planning never begins with music, but with the Word of God. Many schools now use the Sunday lectionary readings as the basis for their chapel worship. This approach has many benefits apart from the obvious one of being a well-organized, thematically grouped series of lessons. Using the appointed lessons for the week gives teachers the chance to reinforce what has (or will) happen on Sunday morning in a more intimate setting. Teachers also have the opportunity to make the readings more accessible for the younger children than might be possible in a Sunday service. While not often thought of in that way, the lectionary is a very sound curriculum. Here, for example, are the Gospel lessons for the month of September:

September 7 — Pentecost 16: Mark 7:31-37, "Jesus heals the deaf and dumb man."

September 14 — Pentecost 17: Mark 8:27-35, "Deny yourself and follow me."

September 21— Pentecost 18: Mark 9:30-37, "The first among you must be everyone's servant."

September 28 — St. Michael and All Angels:[1] Luke 10: 17-20, "God's special servants - the angels"

These lessons are all linked by the themes of servanthood, discipleship, and care for those in need. There are many hymns and songs appropriate for these lessons, but to make good choices for a congregation consisting of children, it is important to keep several general guidelines in mind:

1. Children are capable of sensing the connection between the spoken and sung word. Hymns should complement and reinforce the message of the scripture lessons.
2. Children of varying ages are present. We should be concerned enough for the primary age children to include music which is age-appropriate for them as a part of each chapel service. However, we should respect them enough to make sure that their materials also fit with the daily scripture.

3. Limit the number of new hymns and songs the children are expected to learn, so they can really master them. One or two hymns per month is a good learning goal. Start with a smaller number of stanzas and work toward the entire hymn.
4. Make chapel materials a part of your classroom. Integrate a verse of your "hymn of the month" into memory assignments. Sing another verse as an opening or closing prayer.
5. Recycle! Look for hymn texts which might be used several times in the course of the school year. Find hymns whose tunes are sung frequently in your church, or which appear several times in the hymnal. Hymns with short refrains are perfect for school use because older students can learn the whole hymn while younger ones can learn the refrain by rote.

The themes of the lessons and the guidelines listed above led to the following hymn choices for September:

For grades 3-8:

"Come Follow Me, Said Christ the Lord" (#379 *Lutheran Worship*) — The text of this hymn deals with the responsibilities and rewards of discipleship. The tune is rhythmically interesting, and should not be sung too slowly. For the first week, learn stanzas one and five for worship, and add another stanza each week. This hymn may also be reused later in the Lenten season.

"Son of God, Eternal Savior" (#394 *Lutheran Worship*) — Three musical phrases of this lively Dutch folk tune are exact repeats, making it a natural for children. The text speaks of healing and modeling our behavior on that of Christ.

For younger children:

"Children of the Heavenly Father" (#80 *All God's People Sing*) — This classic Swedish hymn is short and simple, making it ideal for young singers. The images of guardianship, care, and healing make it appropriate for the Day of St. Michael.

"Jesu, Jesu" (#141 *All God's People Sing*) — A refrain which could be learned by kindergarten and pre-kindergarten children and a lilting African tune make this hymn a fine choice for learning. The themes of servanthood and love for one's neighbor can be used often throughout the year.

"All Night, All Day" (*Little Ones Sing Praise*) — A lovely spiritual about angels which would make an ideal closing hymn for the Day of St. Michael.

With thought, the right materials, and advance planning, preparing music for chapel can be done easily. But the real rewards come in building up a repertoire of familiar hymns for your students.

1. For more information about the Day of St. Michael and all Angels, see Proclaim. (CPH 99-1598).

DCE Expressions

by Kirk Hille

Confessions of a Collar Chaser: A DCE Goes to Seminary

A younger DCE's honest question at a recent gathering expresses well a genuine concern for many DCEs: "Does anyone ever retire from the DCE ministry?" Career development is a perpetual challenge in DCE ministry. Many DCEs pursue graduate degrees and gain specialization in new ministry areas to extend the life — and liveliness — of their careers. Among those who leave DCE ministry are men who pursue the pastoral ministry. This type of "career development" seems to pose a threat to DCEs, who seem to fear that his choice will validate anyone who has ever said to a DCE, "You should go into the ministry." The DCE's path to seminary also raises special questions for female DCEs: "If the next step in a DCE career is the seminary, where does that leave me?"

The following personal story of a DCE who is now "chasing a collar" in the seminary is intended to spark discussion among DCEs. What about this choice is threatening? Is one man's career development a blow to the credibility of another man's (or woman's) profession? What are some of the healthy and unhealthy motivating factors for DCEs seeking ordination? What unique gifts and experiences can DCEs bring to the pastoral ministry? What is there to celebrate in such a choice? Weigh these questions as you read and discuss these "Confessions of a Collar Chaser."

Here Comes the Betrayer

I will never forget the expressions on the faces of my friends and colleagues as I made the announcement at our local DCE conference meeting: shock, disappointment, betrayal, and in some, a hint of self-doubt. Shock, because the concerns I had shared regarding my ministry in the preceding months had been typical, in no way hinting that such a drastic move was imminent. Disappointment, because my departure would put an end to our mutually rewarding support and collaboration. Betrayal, because our ongoing struggle for legitimacy as commissioned ministers, along with ample anecdotal evidence of pastors who sinfully confuse authority with superiority, had led many of us to view the ordained ministry as oppressive. Self-doubt, because most of us struggle from time to time with the urge to climb from the top rung of our wide, but very short career ladder. After a pause worthy of great tragedy, my friends offered polite congratulations. But their faces continued to ask the question: Why would a dedicated DCE go to the seminary ?

Discerning God's Will

On the surface the answer to the question above is obvious: I came to believe it was God's will that I go. In some ways this is the ultimate answer, and it provided comfort to me, my wife, and the friends we left in our mutual grief. But just beneath the surface lurks a much more difficult question, one with which I continue to struggle: How does one discern God's will, particularly when it involves the painful desertion of one ministry for another? In our holy war against subjectivism, we orthodox Lutherans are trained to deny that God speaks to us today through a "still, small voice" or external signs apart from the Word and sacraments. That leaves us in a real quandary when faced with important decisions on which the Scriptures are silent, such as the choice between two legitimate callings. Whether we base our decision on "gut instincts" or careful rational analysis, can we really say God is leading us? I have come to believe that we can, but only insofar as the result reflects what we know of God's will as revealed in Scripture.

In my case, there was no inner voice, no "handwriting on the wall," nor even a strong emotional desire to go to the seminary. In fact, as former "preacher's kids," my wife and I both shared a prejudice against the lifestyle that accompanies pastoral ministry. I did feel a certain amount of restlessness and frustration, which led me to pray, seek counsel, and investigate my options. But my feelings did not drive me in a definite direction. Instead, the decision came about as the result of a lengthy period of reflection on what might be best for me, my family, and God's family in the church.

A Path for Continuing Education

At a national conference several years ago, my DCE mentor had left me with the words, "You need to continue your education." I knew he was right, but four years later I still had not found the right time or program. Two questions that guided my search were, "What do I really want to know more about?" and "What degree will allow me to use my gifts most effectively?" Eventually I determined that my answer to the first question was "Lutheran theology," and so the seminary became a logical option. As one friend and former Lutheran teacher who had gone to the seminary aptly informed me, "Only about a quarter of what you study at the sem will really be useful in the parish, but where else can you get such a background in theology?"

Loyalty to the DCE profession made discerning the answer to the second question more difficult for me. Eventually I had to admit that my strongest gifts are in leadership: envisioning, motivating, administrating, teaching, and shepherding. With a Masters of Divinity or the equivalent, I would be better able to use these gifts. A pastor and former teammate put it succinctly: "In our system, if you want to call the shots, you've got to wear the collar."

Weighing the Cost

Still, the decision was not entirely my own, since its effect would be as profound on my family as it would be on me. My wife would have to leave a job she loved, and we would have to sell the home where we had hoped to raise kids. We would have to surrender the financial

security we had worked for, spend four years where we did not want to live, and make five moves on the way to a lifestyle with even more potential stress. A key qualification for ministry in Scripture is giving priority to one's spouse and children, so I had to consider seriously , "Is this the best thing for my family right now?" Compared to youth ministry, a move to pastoral ministry seemed to have some potential advantages for my family: fewer lock-ins and weekend retreats, more possible call opportunities (particularly after turning forty), reduced stress due to job conditions entirely beyond my control (including salary), and the possibility of advancing up the career ladder in the future without completely starting over again. On the other hand, public image, the stress of responsibility, and continually being "on call" may be even bigger issues for a pastor's family than for a DCE. I was blessed to have a wife who was sensitive to my struggle and one day announced, "I'm tired of your indecision; I'm going to St. Louis next year with or without you!" Thus, she gave me permission to make the decision, despite its profound effect on us both.

Not only would my family at home be impacted by the decision, my church family would be affected as well. So I had to consider the consequences of the decision for the church at large. Judging from the number of call contacts I received each year, there seemed to be a great demand for youth ministers in our synod — at least for young, energetic youth ministers with a little experience. But every lock-in reminded me that I was not as young or energetic as I used to be, and experience pales in comparison to love, energy, and creativity in working with youth. There seems to be a depressing shortage of opportunities for older DCEs, particularly if they should find themselves burned out on youth work. Meanwhile, there is an increasing surplus of unfilled pastorates in our synod, particularly for those with some maturity who understand people, change, and team ministry. It seemed to me that further study of theology and a move from theological education into pastoral ministry could only benefit the church at large.

Leaving the DCE Ministry

Stereotypically, people leave DCE ministry for teaching, parenting, or pastoring, depending on the gifts with which they are endowed. My wife, Jennifer, left the DCE ministry to become a teacher. Now I find myself becoming a pastor, along with at least six other DCE types and a dozen former teachers at St. Louis alone. How can you know if you should join those who have gone to seminary? The following questions can be your guide:

- What would I like to know more about?
- What role would allow the best use of my gifts?
- Would this be a good move for my family right now?

All church professionals can benefit from more theological education, and the church desperately needs more pastors with the experience that commissioned ministers bring to the office. Going to the seminary is a difficult move. It is a choice that may not elicit the cheers of colleagues. But God's call may override the obstacles and lead you to a new ministry.

What Do You Do for a Living?

"I'm a third grade teacher."

"I'm the Principal of Trinity School."

"I've been a DCE for three years already!"

I've answered this question in similar ways also. Usually, when we are asked, "What do we do for a living?" we automatically share our occupation or our position. Makes sense to me.

However, perhaps we should redefine what we do "for a living" the way a six-year-old girl did when asked, "What does your dad do for a living?" She simply said, "He tickles me and wrestles with me every night!" The inquirer was not satisfied with that answer so again he asked, "No, I mean, what does he do in life?" And our little friend boldly stated again, "He plays with me!"

What a marvelous answer! This little six-year-old understands what life is all about, better than many of us do. She paraphrased in a nutshell what John 10: 10 says about Jesus coming into our lives: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

How sad it is that I so often look at what I do in life through the eyes of my profession and career. The Lord has freed us to see that life is for living, and living means reacting, relating, and remembering the gifts and joys of the people around us.

Some of us still struggle with society's work ethic which pushes us to find our identity primarily from our life's career. Some of us still feel guilty by taking a day off now and then. Some can never do that. That's not what the Lord calls "real living!"

In an article entitled "Keeping Sabbath," Dorothy Bass states, "Slaves cannot take a day off; free people can." As people in Christ, we have been freed to see life through different eyes than the world sees life. Life is to be lived — to the fullest. Life is to be celebrated, to be shared, to be experienced. Life is a gift, and we want to continue to give this gift away to the people around us — even that little six-year-old friend.

As we begin a new season of school, congregational activities, and other ministry events, let us help each other focus on what we really do "in life." Let us raise some tough questions with each other such as, "What is really important in our lives?" "For what are we living?" And another tough one, "How do we want the people around us, young and old, to answer the question, 'What do you do for a living?'"



Have a great fall season! Live life to its fullest! Take time for yourself! Life is for living -- and for giving!

Thanks, my six-year-old friend, for helping us to focus on life the way the Lord intended. So, "What do you do for a living?" I celebrate my faith! I enjoy life, while teaching, listening, playing, and praying! I share my gift with others!

And I tickle people, too!

Other Things New Teachers Need to Know

- That a teacher cannot be all thing to all people.
- That they are powerful and compelling figures in the lives of their students.
- That they need find a "critical friend" whom they can trust to serve as a sounding board.
- That in recalling their school years, students mostly remember their teachers, not the course they took.
- That at times students can be very cruel, difficult, and mean-spirited.
- That it is a mistake to personalize a student's unacceptable behavior.
- That by choosing to be teachers, they have entered an emotionally dangerous profession.
- That they are both role models and change agents.
- That they need to pay attention to both their physical and their emotional well-being.
- That teaching is a complicated business because students are such unexpected blends of character, personality, and background.
- That most of the significant advances in civilization have been the result of the work of teachers.
- That teaching is an act of faith in the promise of the future.

James F. Marran in *Education Week*, Sept. 3, 1997

Secondary Sequence

by Nathaniel Grunst

Here We Are, All Together, As We Sing His Song

A quick visit to the home page of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod found at <http://www.lcms.org> provides a very concise introduction to our church's history. Dr. Samuel Nafzger in his *The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod: A Brief History* relates that some 59 million Lutherans worldwide belong to one of 250 different Lutheran church bodies (average membership: 236,000). The leading nation is Germany with 14.7 million Lutherans out of its 80 million total population. These 14.7 million belong to 15 separate Lutheran church bodies in that country alone.

The United States with its population of 285 million hosts a mere 8.7 million Lutherans in 21 different Lutheran church bodies. Of the three largest groups, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) serves 5.2 million, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) serves 2.6 million, and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) serves 421,000 members. All three of these church bodies are larger than the worldwide average stated above. All three do some very remarkable things.

Cumulatively the three major Synods operate 94 high schools in 24 states, as well as the Bahamas and Puerto Rico. They serve more than 24,000 students. The average high school has 220 students, the largest having 1,000. One out of four Lutheran high school students lives in the state of Wisconsin and one of eight lives in the Milwaukee metro area. There are 15 Lutheran high schools in that state alone. Of the ten largest high schools, five are in Wisconsin.

Of the 97 Lutheran high schools, 63 are affiliated with the LCMS, 14 are affiliated with the ELCA, (eight of these 14 are also LCMS affiliated and shown in the 63 above), 23 are Wisconsin Synod, and three are from other synodical groups. Some basic information is available on all of these schools through the homepage of Valparaiso University at <http://www.valpo.edu>. Some schools with their own homepages are listed with color coded click linkages.

These schools employ 1600 full-time staff and 300 part-time. They are supported by a variety of congregational connections. Some are single parish schools. Some are owned by associations of congregations. Some are independent corporations with congregations holding membership through annual dues structures. Some are owned by regional synods of the larger church body.

Some have arrangements for the boarding of students. Some

are rural. Some are urban. Some are suburban. Some are brand new. Some have been in operation for more than a century. The oldest is Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, since 1865 (WELS). The oldest LCMS school is St. Paul's Lutheran High School, Concordia, Missouri, since 1883. The oldest ELCA charter is Oak Grove Lutheran High School, Fargo, North Dakota, since 1906.

It is a wonderful experience to meet and mingle with people from this great variety of Lutheran backgrounds! It is a blessing that there are forums for the interaction of these diverse Lutheran experiences available every year. In our region the Northern Illinois Lutheran High Schools meet quarterly with the administrators and once each year for the entire faculties. The LCMS, ELCA and WELS high schools all are involved.

Nationally, the Association of Lutheran Secondary Schools meets annually. This organization is a product of the LCMS Board for Congregational Services, Department of School Ministry, led by Dr. Carl Moser and Mr. Ross Stueber. It elects its governing board from the member high schools. In recent years it has invited and included in its meetings the high schools of the ELCA.

The Association of Lutheran Development Executives also meets annually and includes in its membership many high school administrators of the three major synodical groups. It is most invigorating to interact with the representatives from these various perspectives, regardless of the name of the group holding the meeting.

It is to this positive end of invigorating and stimulating our minds that we encourage the involvement of the secondary school teachers in the Lutheran Education Association. Imagine the size of future LEA Convocations! We all have many things in common, regardless of level of teaching or administering. The greatest and most global dimension that we share is Lutheran-ness itself. What is it to be a Lutheran school, a Lutheran teacher, a Lutheran administrator, or simply, a Lutheran?

This is the single global question that glues the 250 Lutheran churches worldwide together. We all have our own perspective, our own stance, our own inability to do otherwise. Thank Martin Luther himself for that. But we each in our own way have a massive drive to retain a witness to those around us. We carry the banner of our forbears wherever we are.

Here in Chicago, one place to see Lutheranism at its best is Luther High School North. We are determined to continue to bear the fruit of our fathers' dreams. Surely each Lutheran high school and each Lutheran entity firmly believes the same for its own ministry. How infinitely more pleasant it is to share this ministry with all others who care.

Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, let us sing His Song, all together, because we are here.

Opening the Mind of a Child, Part Two: Curriculum and Learning

Deciding what to teach is the ongoing challenge of teachers of young children. There are many possibilities and philosophies from which to choose, each based on a specific perspective of what the nature of the teaching and learning process really is. Let's look at three major philosophies of learning.

One approach looks at teaching as a "telling" activity. This approach assumes that teachers have all of the information children need and that the teacher's job is to give that information to the open and ready minds before them. These minds then act like sponges, soaking up the learning. This approach, often called a "behaviorist approach," views the teacher as initiator and the child as respondent.

Another approach looks at learning as the challenge of discovery. This approach views the teacher's task as providing materials for the child's use and exploration, with a heavy emphasis on the preparation of the environment and the organization of the materials in that environment. With this approach, the teacher becomes an observer and a facilitator, giving information and guidance only as needed – often only as requested. This approach, the "maturationist approach," views the *child* as initiator and the *teacher* as respondent.

Yet another approach views learning as an interaction between discovery and giving information. In this approach neither the teacher nor the child is the initiator or the respondent a majority of the time. Rather, the roles and responsibilities are mutually shared and move between teacher and child in dynamic ways. The the "interactionist approach" views learning and teaching as interactive processes in which the teacher guides while following the child's lead in terms of topics and paths of exploration.

In the interactionist approach the teacher's role is to prepare the materials and the learning environment, and then participate in the use of that environment by asking questions, coaching, and mentoring children as they explore the materials and topics which are available to them. The child's role is to utilize the environment to the fullest, responding to the teacher's coaching and formulating worthwhile questions for further exploration and study.

It is helpful to consider the extremes of these philosophies and to look at the natural outgrowths and prevalent approaches of each in order to analyze ourselves and our teaching.

The behaviorist approach values control and decorum as

important attributes of the early childhood classroom. This "what children need to know" approach looks at what the next teacher hopes children will be able to do, or what they will know, and attempts to teach that information and/or skill in some systematic way.

The maturationist approach values openness and the permission to explore. This "what children need to explore" approach shows little regard for specific content or skills beyond those which children discover on their own through their exploration.

The interactionist approach values both information and exploration, and attempts to strike a balance between the two. This approach prizes joint work of teachers and children, with coaching and guidance toward learning and skills through exploration as the primary mode of learning and joint discovery.

Each of these philosophies leads to a different solution for curriculum. The behaviorist philosophy leads to a set curriculum of topics which looks ahead to the needs and emphases of the following year. This approach, taking the "What should all classrooms be doing on Monday morning?" route to curriculum development, is the homogenized, one-size-fits-all approach to curriculum development. This curriculum can be written by the "experts" who know what "should" be taught at each age and grade level, absolving the individual teacher of worrying over which topics and skills are appropriate for a given group of children in a given year.

The maturationist philosophy, on the other hand, leads to a de-emphasis of topics in the curriculum at all, with the experiences and exploration of a variety of skills as the primary focus. Taking the "What experiences and materials are desirable and appropriate at what age?" path to curriculum development, it is the completely heterogenized, multiple-size approach to curriculum development. This curriculum does not need to be written at all. Teachers simply "go with the flow," providing interesting materials and activities in response to the ongoing interests of children.

The interactionist philosophy, as a third option, leads to a blending of topics with experiences, with an emphasis on the teacher-as-guide. It takes the "what topics are interesting to this group of children?" perspective to curriculum development, a multiple-size approach to curriculum development through the lens of desirable skills and dispositions of learning. The interactionist approach demands a complex response to the challenge of curriculum development and organization, requiring the teacher to consider skills, appropriate topics, children's interests and their activities as equally germane to the question of what to teach when.

In this paradigm, teachers map out a list of potential topics for exploration, knowing that the map may change as the year unfolds. At the same time, teachers need to know which skills may be honed through the exploration of each topic. Yet another consideration is that different children in the class will be ready for different aspects of a given topic – *and* be working on different skills through their exploration.

The approaches to learning which we have been exploring throughout this column over the past year all point to the interactionist approach to curriculum

development. This approach is supported by the writings of Piaget, Vygotsky, Katz and Chard, and even Montessori. Each of these theorists approaches the child as a dynamic and increasingly competent individual who already has skills and interests of his/her own. The development of projects for children's exploration and learning is an interactionist approach to curriculum development and implementation.

The interactionist strategy involves a complex approach to teaching and learning. The interactionist teacher knows that each child needs to be drawn into the learning and the activity – and that different aspects of the topic will be of interest to different children. The interactionist teacher trusts each child to learn what he/she is ready to learn, while at the same time coaching and challenging each child into stretching his/her skills to the next level. Finally, the interactionist teacher is able to cope with the ambiguity of multiple activities and multiple sub-topics simultaneously, knowing that children will not all learn exactly the same things or develop the same skills as the year unfolds. Above all, the interactionist teacher is comfortable with complexity, allowing children to explore, giving guidance as needed, and encouraging children to identify their own interests and challenges.

The challenge of opening the child's mind is the ongoing concern of the interactionist teacher. That's why the project approach still needs our careful attention. Come back next issue for an in-depth look at curriculum and the project approach.

"Great teachers catalyze a burning desire to know. Under their influence, horizons spring wide and fear gives way and the unknown becomes knowable. But most important of all, truth, that dangerous stuff, becomes beautiful and precious."

John Steinbeck

"Teaching is a messy, uncertain business."

Joseph MacDonald

The Gospel According to Winnie-the-Pooh

By Phil Heinze

Chapter Six in Which We Are Deceived

Deception is a tricky business. That's the whole point, isn't it? To trick someone into believing something that is, isn't, or something that isn't, is. It's like magic, but not so nice.

Deceptions come in all sizes. Some are quite elaborate and are called conspiracies. Conspiracies require more than one person on the deceiver's end of the deception, and it helps if you're a politician, although it's not a requirement. A conspiracy just means a bunch of people all decide to tell the same lie. Or, in the case of some families, decide not to say anything at all.

Some deceptions are so small we call them little, as in "little white lies." That means not being exactly honest with a person because it might hurt their feelings, although if they knew you were deceiving them it might hurt them more. Deception is a tricky business.

Winnie-the-Pooh is trying to get some honey from a beehive high in a tree. His deception is to roll in a very muddy place and then float up to the hive holding on to a blue balloon so as to appear to be a small black cloud.

"When you go after honey with a balloon, the great thing is not to let the bees know you're coming." It is a very tricky deception for a bear with no brain. Unfortunately the bees become suspicious, and Pooh becomes anxious. Even having Christopher Robin pace back and forth with an umbrella muttering, "Tut, tut. It looks like rain," doesn't help.

In the end Pooh decides that these are the wrong sort of bees and wishes to come down right away, but not too quickly, if you know what I mean. So Christopher Robin shoots Pooh's balloon with his gun, and as the air slowly comes out, Pooh slowly comes down.

Although Pooh came down all right, "his arms were so stiff from holding on to the string of the balloon that they stayed straight up in the air for more than a week, and whenever a fly came and settled on his nose he had to blow it off. And that is why he is called Pooh."

(*Winnie-the-Pooh* by A.A. Milne, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York; 1950)

"If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." I John 1:8

Winnie-the-Pooh knows why his deceptions get him in so much trouble. After falling out of a tree into a gorse bush — a rather

prickly situation — he observes, "It all comes, I suppose, of liking honey so much." I wonder if we are so honest in our own self appraisal. We like to indulge our sinful nature, at least at first. In fact it is sometimes only the consequences of sin, like gorse bushes, that call us to repentance. What they don't know won't hurt them . . . ?

Sin is a tricky business because it is deception at its best. The first and best deception is that sin is primarily what we do and not who we are. If sin is limited to what we do, then we can stop sinning. And people who think they have stopped sinning act in extremely sinful ways toward those who they think have not. You see it goes much deeper than behavior. "We are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves . . ." Does that mean we can't change sinful behavior? Of course not. See how tricky it is?

What we can do is be honest with God, ourselves, and one another by confessing that our bondage comes from liking sin so much, from it being our very nature. What we can do is be honest with God, ourselves, and one another that the honey of self-indulgence and self-justification and self-pity and even self-hatred is a deception from which we need to be freed, before we land in the gorse bush. What we can do is be honest with God, ourselves and with one another that we are the ones we most often deceive.

And then God who is faithful and just will take careful aim and burst our balloons of deception so that we are rescued from ourselves, although we might be stiff for a little while. Grace can be tricky business, too.

"Teaching, I was coming to understand, was a kind of romance. You didn't just work with words or a chronicle of dates or facts about the suspension of protein in milk. You wooed kids with these things, invited a relationship of sorts, the terms of connection being the narrative, the historical event, the balance of casein and water. Maybe nothing was intrinsically interesting.' Knowledge gained its meaning, at least initially, through a touch on the shoulder, through a conversation of the kind Jack MacFarland and Frank Carothers and the others used to have with their students."

Mike Rose, *Lives on the Boundary*

A Final Word

by George C. Heider, President

May I Ask You a Question?

One of the great blessings of childhood is a natural sense of curiosity. Children are full of questions, as they seek to comprehend the world around them and their place in it. From the traditional and universal ("Why is the sky blue?") to the more profound and particular ("Why did my Grandpa die?"), children seem naturally endowed with both a sense of wonder and an implicit confidence that someone knows the answers.

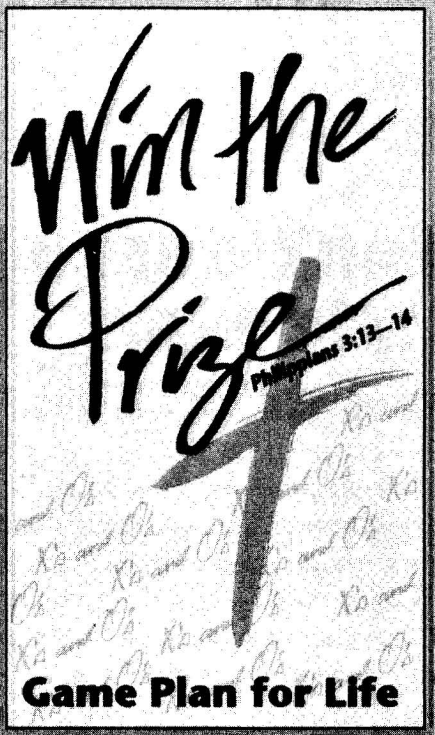
Among our tasks as educators is, of course, both to nourish and to guide our students' curiosity. In fact, one of the most destructive acts any teacher can perform is to suppress that gift, either by conveying that the students' questions are not worth asking (because they're "silly" or "dumb") or by leading them to think that, in fact, the need to ask questions diminishes with maturity (so that withdrawal from active inquiry is seen as a sign of sophistication).

For the Christian educator, the goal here may be seen as yet one more facet of the "childlike faith" commended by our Lord for us all. Christians are full of questions! Mature faith entails a recognition that our salvation does not depend on our having a series of right answers, but is rather received through trust in the God who created us with curiosity as one of many ways in which we may render glory to God. Moreover, particularly in our sinful world, there is much that is uncertain and even paradoxical. Faith recognizes that there is, within God, a "simplicity on the far side of complexity" (to borrow Oliver Wendell Holmes's phrase), but that it often lies beyond our human ken, at least this side of heaven.

Our task, then, is to develop in our students both their God-given, lifelong inquisitiveness and the faith which trusts in God, even in the face of complexity or (as the Church Father Tertullian averred) absurdity. We all have a question or two which we'd like answered upon our arrival in heaven. Most profound of all, perhaps, is "Why?", as in "Why did you, Lord, go to the lengths you did for me?" But there is an eternity's worth of others.

We'll get our answers, no doubt, but, then again, we may well be beyond questioning by then, having been caught up in the disposition expressed by the hymn writer: "lost in wonder, love, and praise." That's a risk we curious types will just have to take.

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